

· *Reorganizing the  
High-School Curriculum*

# **REORGANIZING HIGH-SCHOOL**

*Third Edition*

**THE MACMILLAN COMPANY**

*A Division of The Crowell-Collier Publishing Company*

**NEW YORK**

# **THE CURRICULUM**

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*First Printing*

*Library of Congress catalog card number: 62-8551*

*The Macmillan Company, New York  
Brett-Macmillan Ltd., Galt, Ontario*

*Printed in the United States of America*



*To CAROLE LYNN*

## *Preface*

THE PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION, which was published in 1947, began with this statement: "The American high school is potentially one of the most significant agencies for interpreting, promoting, and refining the democratic way of life. Before World War II it enrolled seven out of ten boys and girls of the high-school age group. It was on the road to becoming the training ground for *all* American youth. While the war brought about a temporary decline in enrollment, due largely to the demand for workers, the period which lies ahead will undoubtedly witness a resumption of the upward trend." As the third edition is published almost nine out of ten youth of the 14 to 17 year age group are enrolled in the high school, and it does not require prophetic insight to predict that the upward trend will continue, barring another world war—and this in spite of some forces that seek to lower the compulsory education age limit in order to eliminate from school students who cannot profit materially from a rigorous "academic" program. The commitment of the American people to a high-school education for *all* American youth is even stronger than in 1947.

Between 1947 and 1953, when the revised edition appeared, many significant events took place. The preface to the 1953 edition pointed out that "the demand for a more dynamic educational program is more insistent than in 1947. Threats to our democracy both from within and without and the new and broader concept of world leadership which is emerging call, more than ever, for a high school program which is dedicated to the development of effective citizenship." This statement

was written five years before Sputnik I was launched by the Soviet Union; before the Supreme Court had made far-reaching pronouncements concerning equality of educational opportunities for all youth irrespective of race or creed; before the Congress of the United States had enacted the National Education Defense Act of 1958, which, in a measure shifted the role of education from the traditional emphasis upon the development of the individual to service to the nation.

We now know that we have lost our technological supremacy which we had taken for granted in 1953, and that the threats which we then perceived dimly now loom before us with devastating clarity. Hence, the necessity for looking searchingly at the American high school, in terms of the new tasks demanded by the national and world scene, is more imperative than ever.

The 1947 preface stated that there was confusion in the purposes of the high school. It asserted that "schools have always claimed to be concerned with democratic citizenship, but all too frequently the term has been vaguely defined and the means that have been used bear little relation to the projected goal." Are we nearer today to a consensus upon the ends for which the schools should strive and the means to be used in attaining those ends?

Drawing again on the preface to the 1947 edition: "In the postwar period the high school is called upon to clarify its purposes and to provide appropriate tools for achieving them. In this task there are many to advise. Some would return to the classical tradition—virtually turning their backs upon the present. Others would stress the teaching of the fundamentals, drawing heavily upon the lessons supposedly learned from the most devastating war in history." These proposals are still with us, perhaps under a different guise. In the name of *excellence* or *quality* in which everyone believes, educators are called upon by powerful groups to reorient the curriculum toward the "academic subjects" for the purpose of training "the intellect." To this group "life adjustment" has become a "dirty term," and the concept back of it is linked with the "outmoded philosophy of John Dewey and the progressives," who sought to vitalize education by relating it more closely to the life of the learner. In the name of this new concept of excellence, the mastery of the "academic disciplines" through hard rigorous work is more and more dominating the educational scene. Is this trend congenial to the democratic commitment of education for all? Will it result in the

tough-mindedness needed for survival in the nuclear age? Certainly the answer is far from clear.

Another trend which is indirectly related to the demand for "excellence" and directly related to the "population explosion" which has resulted in overcrowding in the schools and a severe teacher shortage is toward automation in the form of teaching machines, programmed learning, television, and the like. This trend was practically non-existent in 1947, and even in 1953, was still barely discernible. Now, supported by huge foundations with almost unlimited resources, it has tremendous potentialities for curriculum reorganization. However, unless these new tools are used in connection with a clearcut conception of democratic educational philosophy and goals, they may not result in the promised improvement of the curriculum. The authors attempt in various chapters to examine and evaluate this trend.

Like the earlier editions, the present volume is designed to afford help to students preparing to teach, teachers in service, administrators, and laymen in understanding and interpreting the conflicts and issues on the present educational scene, and in developing a consistent point of view toward them. The authors try to deal fairly with conflicting ideas but at the same time, seek to present a clear point of view toward them. This point of view and the implementation of it is based upon the authors' unqualified commitment to the furthering of democracy through education. They support wholeheartedly the concept of the individual stated in *Goals for Americans* (p. 3) which reads as follows: "The status of the individual must remain our primary concern. All our institutions—political, social, and economic—must further enhance the dignity of the citizen, promote the maximum development of his capabilities, stimulate their responsible exercise, and widen the range and effectiveness of opportunities for individual choice."

The organization of the Third Edition is only slightly changed from that of the 1953 edition. It is based upon the premise that there should be no sharp divisions between subject matter and method, the curriculum and the extra-curriculum, education and guidance, and philosophy and practice. This unified concept is caught up in the learning activities which the school provides for achieving its goals—in short, in its curriculum.

While the organization is similar, the content has been largely rewritten in terms of the current scene and upon the basis of a rather exhaustive study of the vast literature dealing with public education from

both professional and lay sources, much of which deals with sharp criticisms of the program of the high school.

Chapter I attempts to set the stage for a consideration of present-day curriculum problems. This it does by raising and responding to the same searching questions around which the first chapter of the 1953 edition was organized. It seemed wise to look at these questions again after a period of remarkable socioeconomic change. Most of the questions are discussed briefly in this chapter and are developed more fully in later chapters.

Chapters II, III, and IV deal with the foundations of curriculum development and improvement. In Chapter II a number of formulations of educational philosophy are examined in terms of their implications for program development, and some well-known statement of goals are examined and evaluated. Emphasis is placed upon democratic values as the proper source of a working philosophy and its translation into educational goals. Chapter III contrasts earlier conceptions of learning, based upon an atomistic theory of learning, with the newer conception of thinking as "the method of intelligent learning." The present trend toward automation receives some consideration in this connection. Chapter IV, which concludes Part I, *Foundations of Curriculum Development*, considers the adolescent in our culture, his nature, needs and problems. Some of the recent research studies are given consideration. Implications for curriculum development are presented.

Chapters V, VI, VII, and VIII deal with the broad problem of design or structure commonly referred to as scope and sequence. In Chapter V the relative merits of the direct-experience versus the organized subject approach are examined, particularly in light of the current emphasis upon organizing the "disciplines" to promote discovery by the student of the major generalizations which define them. Chapter VI treats the problem of design of the general education program and attempts to evaluate certain current proposals for curriculum improvement, and classroom organization in terms of their implications for the design of the general education program. Chapter VII deals with the specialized-education program designed to meet the needs of small groups and individuals. The various types of schools organized to meet these needs are examined and evaluated. Special emphasis is given to the comprehensive high school as an institution for dealing with specialized as well as general education. Emphasis is also given to pro-

cedures for meeting specialized needs—especially of gifted students. These programs are evaluated in terms of the authors' commitment to democratic values. Chapter VIII, the final chapter of Part II, *Determining the Broad Structure of the Curriculum*, is concerned with some of the leading procedures utilized in curriculum development. These procedures range from the acceptance-of-authority procedure to recent attempts to discover the needs, problems and interests of the adolescent. Presently the trend seems to be in the direction of curriculum development by "experts," with schools accepting their findings. The influence of this practice upon the profession of teaching is discussed briefly.

Chapters IX, X, and XI are addressed to the problem of translating a basic philosophy, a concept of the nature of the learner and the learning process, and a workable curriculum design into classroom practice. To this end, Chapter IX discusses at some length the evolution of what seems to the authors to lead toward a generalized procedure applicable to all or nearly all teaching. Within this broad framework special methods would, of course, play a significant role. It is recognized that this proposal runs counter to present practices and is the subject of sharp controversy. Chapter X attempts a synthesis of student participation in school and classroom, teaching controversial issues, and guidance as it relates to helping the student solve his problems through school and classroom activities. The discussion centers around the thesis that a democratic climate in the school and community is an all-important requisite to good teacher-student relations and a successful program for teaching controversial issues. Guidance, so far as the classroom teacher is concerned, is a normal part of the day-to-day work of the classroom. Needless to say, the principles of democratic group process play an important role in good administrator-teacher, student, and community relationships. Chapter XI is a rather dramatic illustration of the application of many of the principles set forth in previous chapters. It is a report of a learning unit carried out by a teacher in The Ohio State University School. The unit was not developed with a view to being published. Rather it represents the kind of teaching and learning that is characteristic when teachers operate in a democratic climate. By a happy coincidence, the observer who prepared the report in connection with a doctoral study carried on under the direction of one of the authors, made it available for use in this edition. The account closes Part III, *Improving the Quality of Instruction and Learning*.

Chapters XII and XIII deal with the problem of curriculum development and improvement as an in-service function of the administrative and teaching staff. Chapter XII is addressed specifically to the building of resource guides or units by groups of teachers. Principles are presented and illustrated by a resource unit developed in several seminars conducted by one of the authors. The development of units such as the one presented is regarded as being well within the capabilities of the average teaching staff under good leadership. Chapter XIII attempts to present concrete suggestions and activities which may be carried out by a curriculum-improvement group. The focus of the chapter is upon a resource unit in curriculum improvement developed by one of the authors working closely with a group of graduate students, all of whom were experienced teachers or administrators. This chapter concludes Part IV, *Working Together for Curriculum Improvement*.

In this edition, much more attention is given to audio-visual materials than in the previous editions. These include films, film strips, and recordings. For facility in use, appropriate materials bearing upon each of the first three parts of the book are listed at the close of each part. This is not to say, of course, that some of these materials might not be used in connection with any of the four parts of the book.

The authors acknowledge their indebtedness to their colleagues in The Ohio State University from whom they have received much inspiration, and to their many students, both on the secondary and higher-education levels, the contributions of some of whom receive specific acknowledgment at various points in the book. Both of the authors have, of course, been greatly influenced by many educators, but more specifically by the writings of John Dewey, Boyd H. Bode, V. T. Thayer, Max Otto, Harold Fawcett, C. B. Mendenhall, H. Gordon Hullfish, and Alan Griffin. Fortunately, one or both of the authors have been privileged to work closely with each of these great teachers. Finally, acknowledgment is made to the many publishers of copyrighted material which has been quoted and to the score of school officials who supplied photographs of school activities. Without these materials the present edition would be far less valuable.

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*Reorganizing the  
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## *The Present Status of High-School Education: a critical appraisal*



ONE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS of a democratic society is change. In periods of crisis, such as the one that has existed since the close of World War II and is likely to continue for a long time, change is greatly accelerated. Another characteristic of democracy is that the people, through their organized institutions and representatives, are expected to direct change. Fortunately our society accepts the idea that the common man through the use of the method of intelligence is capable of making the "best" decisions. This is one of the foundation stones of our democracy. As a matter of fact it is the only safeguard of the people against tyranny and slavery. But making decisions as to what roads to travel is difficult. Youth in our culture is caught up in a period of history in which there is much confusion as to our goals and purposes.

At the present time our society is confronted with momentous decisions as to the direction which change should take. Our way of life is threatened both from without and within. On the world scene, the threat of total nuclear war is constantly in the foreground. Technological development has forever destroyed the possibility of national isolation. Science tells us plainly that there can be but *one world*; yet, for as far ahead as can be seen, clashing ideologies are likely to prevent the realization of a united world. For the first time in history, the technological supremacy of the United States has been successfully challenged. Since the Soviet Union placed in orbit its first satellite, in 1957, we have been engaged in a frantic but apparently unsuccessful effort to "catch up." Mounting world tensions are the inevitable result.

Science and technology have provided man with the instruments which may be used to destroy himself or to build a better world. Clashing ideologies now literally prevent him from utilizing the fruits of technology for promoting human welfare.

A large percentage of our staggering budget must be spent upon building more and more powerful weapons of destruction. The alarming prediction is made that in the first hour of a total nuclear war, 50 per cent of our population and 60 per cent of our industry would be wiped out!

In addition to the threat of devastating war, the so-called "free" world is battling with the totalitarian bloc for the minds of the vast "uncommitted" populations of the world. The result is a highly competitive political socioeconomic situation that adds to the tension. If we extend economic and/or military aid to these nations, we are accused of war-mongering domination or of attempting to perpetuate an outworn colonialism. If we do not, then we stand a chance of having them join our enemies. Thus, the role of our nation in providing world leadership is not clearly defined. We vacillate from one extreme to the other.

Such uncertainties and conflicts profoundly affect the attitudes and actions of our citizens—particularly young people now growing up in our schools. They are being called upon to assume an ever-widening responsibility for helping to shape the outcome of the present world struggle.

On the national scene, which, of course, reflects the world climate, we as a people are beset by indecision, conflict, and confusion. We want world organization, but we fear inroads upon our national sovereignty. We want government to assume increased responsibility for social welfare, but this desire runs counter to our cherished ideals of personal freedom. We want increased control of industry, but at the same time we want to protect the "free enterprise" system. We cherish freedom of speech, but we are afraid to give it to those who differ with us. We have faith in the method of intelligence as a way of solving moral and ethical problems, but we fear that its use will make serious inroads upon our religious beliefs. We recognize the validity of the American concept of equality, but we continue to discriminate against those who differ from us in race, nationality, economic and social status, and creed. We want to preserve our democracy, but we tend to use undemocratic means to accomplish our desire—means which may in the long run destroy democracy itself.

The confusions and conflicts here sketchily presented are inevitable

trend. While accurate statistics are not available, it is safe to assume that at the present time between 85 and 90 per cent of the youth of high-school age are enrolled, and it is altogether probable that the percentage will increase significantly during the next decade.<sup>1</sup>

On the surface, this rapid growth of the high-school population would appear most gratifying. Not only do more students enter high schools, but also they remain longer. However, when we inquire into the composition of the more than one-third of the high-school population that fails to graduate we find that these dropouts are made up, for the most part, of students of low academic ability and those who come from the low income groups of our population. Youths of low mental ability usually do not get into the high school, and when they do there is little likelihood that they will continue until graduation. One investigator places the chance that a student of average or less than average intellectual ability, as measured by intelligence tests, will continue to the senior year, as about one in twelve. This means that the student who is less able to meet the problems of life outside the school either does not get to the high school at all or drops out in a short time. It is estimated by the Office of Education that only about 60 per cent of those who enter high school actually continue until graduation.<sup>2</sup> There are many people, including an articulate group of educators, who insist that this is as it should be. They claim that the presence of the low-ability student results inevitably in a lowering of standards. It has been seriously proposed that in view of the "population explosion" and the consequent problem of providing adequate high-school facilities, the compulsory education age be lowered so as to eliminate the low-ability students who are now forced by law to attend school. This group tends to ignore the fact that a fundamental reorganization of the curriculum to provide for all levels of ability would be a more satisfactory solution of the problem from the standpoint of democratic education.

Another selective factor in high-school attendance is the financial status of parents. When we consider the low annual income of large numbers of American families, it becomes evident that for many young people

<sup>1</sup> See: *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, Third Edition, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1960, pp. 1272-82. See also: William M. Alexander and J. Galen Saylor, *Modern Secondary Education: Basic Principles and Practices*, New York, Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1959, Chapter II.

<sup>2</sup> For an excellent analysis of the composition of this group and the reasons for early leaving, see Harold Hand, *Principles of Public Secondary Education*, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1958, Chapter V.

high-school attendance is simply out of the question. Free education is really a myth. Hand, a pioneer investigator of the cost of high-school attendance estimated several years ago that the average cost of attending high school was about \$125.00.<sup>3</sup> Since then the costs have risen steadily. In his most recent publication Hand, after reviewing the data on costs of high-school attendance, has this to say:

When one looks at these figures in conjunction with the drop-out figures . . . two things become apparent. One is that many of the parents in the low income families simply cannot find the money to keep their children in high school, and the drain on the family budget becomes increasingly acute as the children progress from the ninth to the twelfth grade. Second, many boys and girls from poor families don't want to stay in high school when it means that their poverty, i.e., the poverty of their parents will prevent them from maintaining themselves on a social level with their fellow students. In other words, young people want to keep up with the Joneses as much as older people do, and in school this means continuing expenditures for a multitude of goods and services which are important to the adolescent sensibility—admission fees for athletic contests, parties, dances, dramatic performances; fees or special assessments for homemaking, mechanical drawing, wood-working, laboratory science and other courses; charges for gym clothes, lockers, towels, domestic science uniforms, band and orchestra instruments and uniforms, athletic equipment, rooters' caps, class sweaters, rings, keys, pins; expenditures for various tag and ribbon drives, ROTC medals, school excursions, textbooks, workbooks, pens, pencils, paper, ink; subscriptions to the school yearbook, newspaper, magazine, handbook, costs of photographs for the school yearbook and for graduating, graduation announcements, diploma fees, commencement caps and gowns, and so on.<sup>4</sup>

All this means that there is a serious barrier to high-school attendance which prevents youth from the less favored groups from receiving the benefits of a high-school education.

In some of the states, equality of educational opportunity is denied certain racial and nationality groups. This is particularly true of Negroes in the South where segregation is the common pattern. All too often young people are forced to travel long distances to attend poorly equipped segregated schools. This accounts for the fact that a much lower percentage of Negro youth attends high school.

It must be pointed out, however, that the situation is slowly improv-

<sup>3</sup> Harold Hand, "For Whom Are High Schools Designed?" *Educational Leadership*, VI, 358-365 (March, 1949).

<sup>4</sup> Hand, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

ing. Spurred by Supreme Court decisions and a gradual shift in attitude toward the Negro, many school districts are making rapid strides to provide equality of opportunity. In several districts in Maryland, for example, high-school buildings and equipment of Negro schools are superior to those provided for youth of white parentage. Probably this situation is fairly typical. The 1954 decision of the Supreme Court has brought about at least "token" integration in most of the Southern states. However, only about six per cent of colored youth is presently enrolled in integrated schools. Perhaps even greater progress has been made in providing equality in teachers' salary schedules. Most of the Southern states have laws providing for the same schedule for white and colored school teachers.

Another shortcoming which must be mentioned is the failure of communities to provide educational opportunities beyond the twelfth grade. The so-called junior college, or as it is coming to be known, the community college, has proved its value in the states where it has been developed, but it has not been extended sufficiently to provide opportunities to the great mass of youth who have the capacity to profit from education beyond the traditional twelve years. In some states, the situation has been partly remedied by the establishment of branches of the state universities. These branches are usually located in the larger cities and provide two-year programs—usually following rather closely the curricular pattern of the parent institution. These branches are no substitute for community colleges that offer two years of terminal education, as well as academic programs. Strangely enough, the establishment of community colleges has been sometimes opposed by the state universities that are complaining that they now have too many students.<sup>5</sup>

In spite of the shortcomings mentioned above, the holding power of the high school has steadily increased. It has been estimated that, whereas in 1910 only 28 per cent of the ninth-graders reached the twelfth grade,

<sup>5</sup> For example, see an editorial by Roscoe H. Eckelberry, "Selfish and Therefore Short-Sighted," *Educational Research Bulletin*, XL, 41 (February, 1961). See also, *Goals for Americans*, Report of the President's Commission on National Goals, New York, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960, Chapter III, "National Goals in Education," by John W. Gardner. He urges that institutions be established "roughly within commuting distance of every high-school graduate (except in sparsely settled regions)" that provide terminal courses for those not expecting to complete a four-year college program; the first two years of a four-year college program; a technical institute; and education for adults.

in 1950 the percentage reached 70. And once having reached the twelfth grade, approximately 95 per cent graduate.

If the present trend toward higher *academic* requirements for all students continues and ways are not found to overcome the shortage of classrooms and other school facilities, the holding power of the high school is not likely to increase in the foreseeable future.

While it is true that we are now producing more high-school graduates than all the rest of the world together,<sup>6</sup> it is evident that we have a long way to go before we can claim that the American high school has achieved the ideal of equality of opportunity for all youth.

*Do High Schools, By and Large, Carry on Their Programs in the Light of a Consistent, Well-Developed Philosophy or Set of Purposes?* In recent years a great deal of emphasis has been placed upon the purposes of education in American democracy. Dozens of formulations of purposes or goals have been formulated by commissions, committees, groups, and individuals.<sup>7</sup>

There seems to be general, though certainly not complete, agreement that each school system should formulate a statement of its own philosophy and purposes in light of its own values and that this formulation should give direction to the program. Many states make such statements a requirement for accreditation. Undoubtedly this has been an important factor in stimulating local school districts to re-examine their purposes periodically. Some schools, particularly those that have developed new curricular programs, have given much attention to this problem. However, an examination of the literature of high-school education reveals that even in the area of educational theory there is much disagreement as to the purposes which the institution should serve. To some, the school should transmit the social heritage. To others, it should seek to improve the life of the community and reconstruct the ideals of the culture. To still others, it should be an instrument of the state for its own perpetuation. Others would make it largely a school for training in vocations.

All too frequently formulations made by local districts are not implemented in practice. For example, there are many diverse and conflicting

<sup>6</sup> See William M. French, *Education for All*, New York, The Odyssey Press, 1955.

<sup>7</sup> Among the most comprehensive formulations are the following: Will French and Associates, *Behavioral Goals of General Education in High School*, New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1957; *Goals for Americans*, op. cit., Chapter III.



curricular practices even in the same school. Methods range from the daily ground-to-be-covered procedure to long-range teacher-student planned assignments. In some areas the teachers may rely heavily on the outmoded doctrine of formal discipline, while in others learning is regarded as dynamic and purposeful. New subjects are frequently introduced because of the demands of pressure groups without much reference to the basic purposes of the school or to the subjects' relationship to other areas. Evaluation programs frequently do not even purport to test the values set forth in the statement of purposes. In short, the existence, on paper, of a well-formulated set of purposes is no guarantee that it actually functions in practice. Evidence of this was found by Knapp<sup>8</sup> in a study of curriculum changes in Ohio.

He sampled about 25 per cent of the schools and found that most of them (82 per cent) had a written philosophy and that of the remaining 18 per cent, all but five per cent were at work on such a formulation. In a recent article summarizing his study, he states:

... one-half of the schools failed to respond when asked to what extent the school's philosophy influenced additions of required courses. An additional 19 per cent of the schools reported that changes in general education courses had no relationship to their expressed philosophy of education. The responses to this question, as well as the statements submitted as the major reason for adding each course suggested that many additions came about because of "the trend," "the demands of our age," or because of the need for factual information of a particular kind.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, we must conclude that school programs as a rule are not developed and changed in light of a consistent guiding philosophy or set of purposes.

*To What Extent Has the High-School Curriculum Kept Pace with the New Demands Made on It by the Changing Socioeconomic Scene and the New Concept of Adolescent Needs?* It is a well-known fact that high-school offerings have increased enormously during the past few decades. This is particularly true in the larger high schools. In 1890 the curriculum consisted largely of the so-called academic subjects. The

<sup>8</sup> Dale Knapp, *An Evaluative Study of Curriculum Changes in Ohio Secondary Schools*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1959.

<sup>9</sup> Dale Knapp, "Curriculum Changes—by Drift or Design?" *Educational Leadership*, XVII, 233-236 (January, 1960).

famous Committee of Ten (1893) recommended five separate curriculums that varied little from each other except that some curriculums required more units of ancient and modern languages and mathematics. Now the situation is quite different. Schools have expanded their offerings to include a wide range of "practical" subjects such as home economics, fine and industrial arts, music, and an impressive list of vocational subjects. The "academic" subjects have also undergone expansion. General language, general science, and general mathematics have become quite common. Courses in psychology, conservation, and safety are also finding their way into the high-school curriculum. It should be pointed out, too, that there is a trend toward a unification of subjects at the junior high-school level. The favorite combination is English and social science, but in some of the more experimental schools core or fused courses are to be found that utilize subject matter from practically all of the fields.

Textbooks, which largely define the content of courses, have been vastly improved. They are better organized—many in terms of units of instruction. They contain more reference materials from sources outside the textbooks. Illustrations are better and more profuse. Vocabulary studies have resulted in language simplification. Workbooks have been written to accompany many textbooks and these are widely used. Some teachers, particularly in the newer fields, have substituted a number of reference books and other library materials for textbook instruction.

Extra-curricular programs, which are regarded theoretically as a part of the curriculum, have been greatly popularized and extended. Athletic programs have flourished. School clubs of every conceivable nature, from the traditional subject clubs (e.g., science or French), to those dealing with such activities as photography and airplane-model building, have sprung up in many schools. And most of these, outside of athletics, are more or less student-planned and controlled.

In spite of these evidences of progress, the high-school curriculum has serious shortcomings. Some of these will be pointed out briefly, leaving the more extended discussion for later chapters.

Many years ago, W. S. Learned<sup>10</sup> pointed out that the curriculum was a "rope of sand"; this is more or less true today. Graduation from high school depends on accumulating sixteen separate "units" without

<sup>10</sup> *The Quality of the Education Process in the United States and Europe*, New York, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1927.

much interrelation or unity. New courses have been added without much study of their relationship to those already a part of the curriculum. Student progress is not cumulative in any intellectual or practical sense. Frequently the teachers in one area have little or no knowledge of what is being taught in other areas. The result, so far as the student is concerned, is frequently confusion, fragmentary knowledge, and inadequate mastery.

The time-honored, well-established academic fields representing accepted logical organizations of knowledge are still a very powerful influence in the curriculum and consume a large part of the student's time. Very frequently they crowd out the more practical subjects simply because they have greater prestige with parents, teachers, and particularly with the colleges. And present-day demands for "toughness," rigorous mental discipline, and the like, are tending to entrench these subjects even more deeply. While this trend toward the academic has been in progress for some time, it has been greatly accelerated by the intense competition with the Soviet Union which allegedly has a "tough" academic program, even though currently the Soviet Union is stressing practical work experience. At any rate the superiority of the European system of education (including that of the Soviet Union) has been widely proclaimed by critics such as Vice-Admiral Hyman G. Rickover.<sup>11</sup> The trend toward emphasis upon the academic disciplines has also been augmented by the widely discussed Conant Report.<sup>12</sup>

While vocational and the so-called practical subjects are still being stressed and to some extent expanded—especially for the average and dull students, such courses are frequently quite divorced from general culture and citizenship training. In many of the smaller schools, and some of the larger ones, the student must choose between classical or modern languages, and home economics or industrial arts. The absurdity of such a program is self-evident.

In spite of the more practical emphases discussed above, schools have

<sup>11</sup> See for example, his many articles in popular magazines, and his widely discussed book, *Education and Freedom*, New York, E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1959.

<sup>12</sup> See James B. Conant, *The American High School Today*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1959; ———, *The Child, The Parent, and the State*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1959; James D. Koerner, ed., *The Case for Basic Education*, Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1959, which is an official pronouncement of the Council for Basic Education of Washington, D.C. While Conant and the Council do not see "eye to eye," they do agree upon a heavy academic emphasis in both the junior and senior high school.

not, by and large, given much attention to personal living, including health education, face-to-face relationships of adolescents, or to the participation of the student in the socioeconomic life of the community. The old issue as to whether the curriculum should be organized in terms of the problems, interests, and needs of students or in terms of preparation for adult life is still a very live one.<sup>12</sup> Present practice certainly indicates that the latter point of view is common. Attempts to get the points of view together in a program have not been very successful. Perhaps the most prevalent assumption is that the formal curriculum is planned to meet the needs of adult life, and the extra-curriculum to meet the immediate needs of students. This conception goes far to block any attempt at basic curriculum reorganization and perpetuates a dualism that need never have developed. It should be pointed out, too, that the slavish following of the adopted textbook tends to "freeze" the curriculum and negate any attempt to secure unity between the curriculum and the extra-curriculum or to relate the curriculum to the particular problems and interests of youth that grow out of their day-by-day interactions with their fellows and their relationships with the immediate and wider community.

The answer to the question posed in this section of the chapter depends to a large extent upon the educational outlook of those who give the answers. The trend toward greater emphasis upon formal subjects would certainly be applauded by many of the critics. In the opinion of the authors of this volume, this emphasis may result in a program which pushes into the background the persistent problems of the adolescent and widens the gap between the learner and the culture.

*How Successful Have High Schools Been in Utilizing Sound Educational Theory and Experimentation in Improving Classroom Procedures?* In the first three decades of the century, there was a marked emphasis upon teaching methods. The Herbartian formal lesson plan was beginning to give way to various types of unit planning. The project method which started in the agricultural field was being applied to other subjects. H. L. Miller experimented with a method which utilized the various steps in the thinking process as stages of learning. H. C. Morrison developed a

<sup>12</sup> See V. T. Thayer, Caroline Zachry, and Ruth Kotinsky, *Reorganizing Secondary Education*, New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1939. The authors attempt to interpret the concept of "needs" in such manner as to cover both the present interests and desires of students and the demands of the adult world.

method known as the Morrison Plan that advocated comprehensive units of subject matter designed to bring about new adaptations or understandings. The Dalton and Winnetka Plans were designed to break the lockstep and permit students to progress at their own rates of learning. V. T. Thayer wrote a book optimistically called *The Passing of the Recitation*. Meanwhile the activity movement, which provided for large "units of work" or "centers of interest," had found considerable acceptance in the elementary-education field. All of these movements were directed against the daily ground-to-be-covered recitation method and were consistent with the new psychology of learning which was being developed.

Up-to-date statistics bearing upon the use of these various plans are difficult to secure. In 1933 not one of them was used by more than 10 per cent of the large number of schools studied. Recent studies indicate that the situation is not much different at the present time. Daily assignment of lessons from textbooks is without a doubt the most common practice in the high schools today. This is particularly true in the so-called academic fields. The fact that this method has long been repudiated by psychologists and educators seems to have little effect upon actual classroom practice.

The daily-assignment technique has the advantage of definiteness and is admirably adapted to the conception of education that prizes the acquisition of knowledge as the chief end of education. The recitation period provides an easy and obvious way of determining whether or not the student has completed the assigned tasks. It is contrary to the modern psychology of learning, however, and does not facilitate the acquisition of such learning products as thinking, creativeness, initiative, and self-direction, which are significant in a democracy.

The significant *Group Dynamics* movement, which promises much for the democratization of teaching procedures, has not yet registered any great impact on teaching procedures, nor is it likely to do so as long as the curriculum is dominated by the ground-to-be-covered conception of education. It is not likely to flourish in a climate characterized by rigidity of content and mastery of facts and information.

Currently much stress is being given to the use of television as an instrument of educational method. Many educators are enthusiastic about its potentialities, not only for making learning more effective, but also for providing better staff utilization. However, a general survey of the

literature<sup>14</sup> fails to reveal any new procedures. Televised lectures by "master teachers" to large groups of students is but a modification of the time-honored "lecture method" which has been largely repudiated in the secondary schools. This has been augmented by short face-to-face discussion periods with small groups of students in order to "clarify" the television presentation and provide the opportunity for participation by students. Claims are made that such practices result in more effective learning, but usually such claims are based upon questionable evaluation procedures which fail to take into account the important intangibles, such as ideals, attitudes, and values which the good school is attempting to foster.

Another movement which is bound to have significance in curriculum development and teaching procedures is the use of so-called "teaching machines." It is too early to predict the total impact of these devices on the schools but it is safe to assume that the detailed, atomistic programming that is necessary will not be conducive to the enhancement of creative thinking. The "programs" are likely to perpetuate and extend the daily ground-to-be-covered textbook method of teaching.

It is, of course, too early to make a final judgment on the use of television and teaching machines, but they have yet to prove the rather exaggerated claims of their proponents.

Reluctantly, then, we are forced to the conclusion that secondary schools generally have not utilized fully the best that is known about educational theory and practice. Undoubtedly gains have been made in teaching skills, particularly in the area of the language arts, but basic teaching procedures reflect to a large degree the prescientific era when learning was regarded as a passive process and education was directed toward disciplining the "mind."

*To What Extent Are Evaluation Programs in the High School Geared with the Modern Conception of the Goals of the Schools?* It has long been known that the learning products which are actually tested are the determining factors in curriculum planning and learning. Traditionally, testing has been largely concerned with facts memorized and skills mas-

<sup>14</sup>The most comprehensive reports are those of the Commission on the Experimental Study of the Utilization of the Staff in the Secondary School, appointed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and supported by the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Advancement of Education. See, J. Lloyd Trump, and Dorsey Baynham, *Focus on Change: Guide to Better Schools*, Chicago, Rand McNally and Company, 1961, for a complete report of the Commission.

tered, rather than with democratic values and attitudes. Nor has the scientific testing movement changed this situation to any great extent, for in this field the emphasis has been placed upon standard norms that assume that large numbers of students have been exposed to the same subject matter, to the same specific facts to be mastered. If the curriculum is changed materially, the tests are no longer appropriate; consequently the tendency is to continue teaching the same subject matter and to stress the same objectives. State scholarship testing programs and the traditional system of "Regents Examinations" have also accented this trend.

Research in evaluation in the Thirties and early Forties gave promise of pointing the way to the development of programs of evaluation which were based upon the values which the school sought to achieve. The group of evaluators<sup>15</sup> in the Eight-Year Study, under the leadership of Ralph W. Tyler, developed instruments for appraising training in thinking, personal-social development, interests, social sensitivity, and the like, and to some extent this type of work has been carried on by the child study specialists, and other workers in the evaluation field.<sup>16</sup> However, like the work of the Eight-Year Study, these findings have made little impact on the high schools. It may safely be stated that most present-day evaluation programs stress the acquisition of facts and information but make superficial attempts to get at the more intangible but significant values.

With the present overcrowding in the colleges and universities, the emphasis upon objective tests and examinations has increased significantly. Even the state universities that traditionally opened their doors to all graduates of fully accredited high schools are beginning to utilize nation-wide entrance examinations; and require that students applying for admission be in the "upper third" of their class and that average or below average students, on the basis of examinations and marks, be

<sup>15</sup> See Eugene R. Smith, Ralph W. Tyler, et al., *Appraising and Recording Student Progress*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1942; J. Wayne Wrightstone, *Appraisal of Experimental High School Practices*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1938.

<sup>16</sup> For example, see H. H. Remmers and N. L. Gage, *Educational Measurement and Evaluation*, Revised Edition, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1955; Robert L. Thorndike and Elizabeth Hagen, *Measurement and Evaluation in Psychology and Education*, New York, John P. Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1955. Note: For an excellent survey of the research in the field of evaluation, prepared by the above authors, see *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, Third Edition, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1960, pp. 482-486.



*Courtesy, Sarasota High School Photo by Philip Hess*

The modern high-school building is functionally designed in terms of a sound conception of philosophy and goals.

A front view of the Riverview High School, Sarasota, Florida, Paul Rudolph, Architect. Its spacious campus, extensive glassed-in areas, and covered walk ways connecting the wings add to its attractiveness.

“warned” of the probability of failure should they attempt to enter college.

Even though not more than half of the high-school graduates expect to enter college, these new pressures from the colleges and universities are forcing the high schools to re-examine their system of appraising and recording student progress—and to introduce more rigid and rigorous evaluation procedures, not only for those students who expect to enter college, but for all. Usually the pattern fits the demands of the college, without much reference to its consistency with the avowed philosophy and goals of the school.

*How Adequate Are High-School Buildings and Equipment for Carrying on a Modern Educational Program?* Even the casual observer can-



not fail to note that there has been a vast improvement in school-building design. Under the stimulation of the scientific study of the efficiency of buildings, school architects have given much more attention in recent years to satisfactory lighting and heating, to the most efficient beam spans, width of corridors, and number and location of lavatories. The battle to include gymnasiums and auditoriums has been won, and the inclusion of studios and shops, while regarded as frills in some quarters, is really a commonplace. Even the external appearance of school buildings has been vastly improved, for while most buildings are still box-like structures without much claim to aesthetic value, they are, however, free from the "gingerbread" decoration of an earlier day. At least one can say that they are not offensive. One may travel through hundreds of towns and cities and find school buildings that are as a rule far above the average of efficiency and appearance to be found in other buildings of the community, including residences. In many communities the public-school building is the only modern building to be found. It is true that one has to apply the criterion: "good for the locality." But with all these material improvements, it must be said that we are only beginning to understand the meaning of "functional design."

School buildings actually built to facilitate an on-going, dynamic philosophy of education are such a rarity as to make one question the functional value of a philosophy of education. The school architect who has any sense of the actual possibilities of building construction as a means of promoting the idea that the school has a distinctive role to perform in transforming the life of the community, is very difficult, if not impossible, to locate. And it is easy to find educational research bureaus that conduct building surveys without any regard whatever for the educational program which is, or ought to be, carried on in the proposed building. Fortunately there is a growing trend toward using faculty committees in building planning. This trend should be encouraged.

Equipment and interior decoration have been vastly improved. Much more care has been given in recent years to the selection of school furniture to facilitate good posture and provide for satisfactory illumination. Excellent reproductions of good paintings have found a place on many schoolroom walls. Well-equipped science laboratories, shops, and studios, designed to provide first-hand experiences, have made their appearance in many high-school buildings. Sound systems and visual aids have come into fairly common use, especially in city school systems. The use of television is growing rapidly.

Yet in this field only beginnings have been made. It is still fairly common practice to decorate all rooms exactly alike, to have seating equipment fastened rigidly to the floor, to plan laboratories as if all pupils were expected to be working on exactly the same project at the same time. Corridors are still cluttered up with unsightly, noisy lockers, and ugly plaster casts. Rooms especially equipped for leisure-time and social activities of teachers and students are conspicuous by their absence. Laboratories, shops, studios, and classrooms are usually not equipped to invite the exploration of individual interest and abilities. The possibilities of arranging school furniture in such a way as to facilitate cooperation among pupils are not developed to any great extent. Provision is seldom made for periodic repainting of murals by students. Exhibit cases for athletic trophies are far more prominent than are appropriate places for exhibiting the arts and crafts work of the students or completed projects in other fields. Draperies are occasionally to be found in principals' offices but are usually considered to be unnecessary for classrooms and laboratories. Why all these deficiencies? Is it because of lack of funds? Usually this is not the answer. Rather, the answer is to be found, partly at least, in a lack of a controlling, consistent, and unified philosophy of education. Generally speaking, school equipment is not seen as a means of facilitating the way of life which we call democratic.

The school-building picture, dark as it is, is likely to become darker as the full impact of the war years extends to the high-school population. High-school buildings, already over-crowded, are inadequate to take care of the ever-increasing student load, and the urgency of providing new buildings, rather than the functional design of the buildings, is likely to be the dominant factor.<sup>17</sup>

*What Role Do High-School Teachers Play in Curriculum Improvement?* There is by no means universal recognition of the fact that teachers ought to play the leading role in curriculum development. However, when programs are introduced that break sharply with the traditional subject-centered program, teachers have taken a leading part. During the

<sup>17</sup> For an architect's view of high-school buildings of the future, see Lawrence B. Perkins, "Planning the High School for Tomorrow's Curriculum," *Educational Leadership*, IX, 409-412 (April, 1952). See also Merle R. Sumption and Jack Landers, *Planning Functional School Buildings*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1957; and, Jonathan King, "In Which the Bell Tolls," *Saturday Review*, XLIII, 84-85; 99-110 (October, 1960). Mr. King is secretary and treasurer of The Educational Facilities Laboratories established in 1958 by the Ford Foundation to help American schools and colleges with their physical problems.

past few years thousands of teachers have given up all or part of their summer vacations to attend workshops for the purpose of working directly on their problems. In some cases, boards of education have financed large groups of teachers for such activity. These teachers have worked together upon the development of philosophy, studies of adolescents, resource units, programs of evaluation, and the like, and have gone back to their schools to do a better job of teaching.<sup>18</sup>

However, there is no evidence to support the view that high-school teachers, by and large, are eager to participate in curriculum-development programs. The reasons are not difficult to discover. Most teachers are products of the academic tradition which holds that the cultural heritage transmitted in the form of textbooks to be studied and mastered will transfer readily to life situations. They have been taught this in college, and their meager professional training has done little to change their beliefs. All through college they are subjected to logically organized systems of knowledge taught by subject-matter specialists. For the student, academic success is defined as mastery of these materials.

On the whole, the teacher has found that the high school in which he teaches is congenial to the perpetuation of the same values he learned to cherish in college. When he enters the classroom, he finds a fixed course of study, perhaps prescribing the ground to be covered each semester, and a textbook containing the subject matter to be taught. It is easy to transfer his college experience to this new situation. He cannot be blamed for doing so. Gradually he develops a deep sense of security through teaching the same cut-and-dried materials year after year. The students don't object. The community is satisfied. Why should he change? In such a climate it is easy to be complacent and self-satisfied, and even to build up barriers to prevent change.

The experience gained from the *Eight-Year Study*<sup>19</sup> tends to support

<sup>18</sup> See Hollis L. Caswell, and Associates, *Curriculum Improvement in Public-School Systems*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1950 for good examples of teacher participation. For illustrations of how individual teachers worked on curriculum improvement, see *Creating a Good Environment for Learning*, 1954 Yearbook, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA, 1954.

<sup>19</sup> See Wilford Aikin, *The Story of the Eight-Year Study*, and H. H. Giles, S. P. McCutchen, and A. N. Zechel, *Exploring the Curriculum*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1941. Similar experience is also reported by Paul Pierce in *Developing a High-School Curriculum*, New York, The American Book Company, 1942.

this point. One of the obstacles to the utilization of the freedom granted by the colleges was the traditional attitudes of teachers. Heretofore, they had rationalized their failure to meet the needs of youth by claims that the college-entrance requirements strait-jacketed them. Released from such requirements, they had neither the will to change nor the understanding of what should be done. In some schools, small groups of teachers were found who had an honest desire to launch out on uncharted seas. New programs were instituted which embraced only a small segment of the students and the more progressively-minded teachers, simply because not all teachers were interested. Often these programs were defeated by the large body of conservatively-minded teachers who not only had no desire to participate in the program, but also saw in it a threat to their own security.

When the teachers of Bloomington, Ill., were asked: "What are your suggestions for improving your school?", 46 per cent had *no* suggestions, and only five per cent suggested improving the curriculum. Twice as many suggested: "Better administrators, supervisors or board members."<sup>20</sup> It is interesting to note that 12 per cent of the senior high-school teachers suggested improving the curriculum. This seems contrary to other findings concerning the complacency of senior high-school teachers as compared with those of the elementary and junior high school. But even though this interest in improving the curriculum is commendable, it must be remembered that *less than one teacher in eight suggested improving the curriculum.*<sup>21</sup>

Perhaps the picture of teacher participation drawn above is too dark. The good teacher, even though the school has no overall design for cur-

<sup>20</sup> Harold Hand and Citizens Advisory Council, *What the People of Bloomington, Illinois, Think About Their Schools*, Bloomington, Ill., Board of Education, 1952, p. 135.

<sup>21</sup> See also, Herbert Coon, *A Study of the Attitudes of Teachers and Administrators Toward High School Curriculum Reorganization*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1951; *We Look at Curriculum Growth*, 1952 Yearbook of the New Jersey Secondary School Teachers' Association, Trenton, New Jersey, Secondary Teachers Association, 1952, Chapter V; Dan S. Noda, *A Study of Successful Practices Used to Remove the Major Blocks to Curriculum Improvement in the Secondary School*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1952. In this study it was found that the following "blocks" ranked three and four, respectively, out of a total of twenty-five: "Failure of teachers to keep pace with new developments in curriculum research causes a serious lag between theory and practice"; "The lack of teacher 'know-how' in curriculum improvement results in a static program, insecurity, indifference, and resistance."

riculum improvement, seeks from day to day to improve learning in the classroom, and it is not difficult to find teacher teams at work on some aspect of the curriculum program.<sup>22</sup> All-school teacher participation in curriculum planning is not likely to flourish unless some well-trained leader, who may be the principal or curriculum director, develops an in-service education program and provides time and resources to work on the curriculum problem. Otherwise curriculum improvement is likely to be a "hit-or-miss" affair, involving the occasional addition of a new course, or the adoption of a new textbook.

*How Well Satisfied Are High-School Students with the Curriculums of Their School?* High-school students show a surprising lack of desire to pursue new curriculums and methods of work that call for the use of initiative, originality, and the ability to plan their work. They, too, have found security in the daily ground-to-be-covered assignments from textbooks and in a testing program that places a premium on the memorization of facts and information. Even in extracurricular activity programs in which students have had abundant opportunity to live in a truly democratic atmosphere, active participation is all too frequently limited to a relatively small percentage of the student group. One needs only to ask college freshmen to express their opinions of their high schools to discover that most of them have been completely satisfied with their program. At best, their criticisms are superficial and lacking in fundamental insight into ways in which the school might have helped them to meet their needs. In the study of the Bloomington, Ill., schools the following conclusion is reached:

Only about a third of either (younger and older) student groups volunteered suggestions for the improvement of their schools. Most frequently mentioned by both groups (about 12 per cent) was the suggestion that more understanding, better, and younger teachers be employed. About five per cent of both the older and the younger pupils suggested that more student activities be provided. Included among the other suggestions which were

<sup>22</sup> For example, see F. B. Stratemeyer, H. L. Forkner, M. G. McKim, and A. Harry Passow, *Developing a Curriculum for Modern Living*, Second Edition, Revised, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1957, Part IV. Many suggestions for teacher participation are found in Harold Alberty, and Associates, *How to Improve the High School Curriculum* (mimeographed), Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1959. See also Harold J. McNally, A. Harry Passow, and Associates, *Improving the Quality of Public School Programs*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1960.

offered by more than one per cent of the students were pleas for more or better equipment, recommendations that the building be modernized or repaired, that pupil behavior be improved and that longer lunch periods and better lunch facilities be provided.<sup>23</sup>

Note that none of these suggestions bears directly on curriculum improvement. One reason for this condition is to be found in the fact that, in spite of what has been said about the democratic character of our high schools, they still remain rather highly selective institutions. Their graduates are largely made up of the students of professional and business groups that occupy a relatively high position on the economic scale. Many students from less favored economic groups tend to drop out early and consequently are not present to testify as to the inadequacy of their high-school experience. It is not surprising to find that those students who survive are fairly well adjusted and have only minor criticisms to make of their school experience.

Fortunately, there is a brighter side, for evidence at hand tends to show that once high-school students become accustomed to a more dynamic type of education, they readily assume responsibility for helping to plan and carry out their own programs. Students have demonstrated that they can participate effectively in community health and recreation programs and in the general improvement of community life. However, such programs flourish only when the climate of the school is such as to encourage youth to speak and to participate. Chapter X discusses rather fully the conditions under which democratic student participation can be successful.

*How Effective Are School Administrators in Providing Leadership in Curriculum Reorganization?* A well-known educator once said: "As the principal, so is the school." This is undoubtedly an overstatement, but it is certainly true that without leadership in the principal's office not much is likely to happen by way of curriculum development. The converse is likely to be true also. Wherever one finds a wide-awake, well-trained principal, an in-service curriculum-development program is likely to be under way. Through democratic administration he is able to overcome most of the obstacles which are presented in this chapter. Many of

<sup>23</sup> Hand, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78. For a penetrating and somewhat devastating analysis of youth's apparent lack of concern for school improvement, see Edgar Z. Friedenberg, *The Vanishing Adolescent*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1959.

these cooperatively developed curriculum programs are described elsewhere in this volume.

But administrators, like teachers, suffer from traditional theories and practices. Their preparation for their work has in the past consisted largely of courses in school finance, business administration, school buildings—all good in themselves but not very valuable for learning how to work with a teaching staff in dealing with vital problems of the classroom.

Then, too, school administration is a hazardous occupation. Frequently administrators do not share the tenure laws enjoyed by teachers. Unfortunately promotions are more likely to come to the administrator if he pursues a laissez-faire policy on curriculum matters. Some of the administrators who have difficulty holding their jobs have been identified with progressive changes in the schools that are not accepted by powerful interest groups in the community. Widely publicized experiences of this sort are likely to cause fear and insecurity on the part of other administrators. Lacking the "know-how" of developing a sound public-relations program, they retreat to the ivory tower and find their security and feeling of achievement in performing efficiently the details of day-to-day administration.

A considerable amount of the blame for the failure of a large percentage of schools to apply sound principles of curriculum development to their programs must be placed upon the shoulders of the high-school principal and other administrative heads. How else can one explain the fact that so little is happening in the field of curriculum development even though the National Association of Secondary-School principals has consistently advocated curriculum reform? Through such publications as *Education for All American Youth*, *Planning for All American Youth*, and the more recent *Education for All American Youth—A Further Look*, it has promoted curriculum development, particularly in the field of general education. But the programs advocated are to be found in very few American high schools.

On the credit side, it must be pointed out that there is increasing evidence that school administrators are beginning to recognize their role in curriculum development—especially as it deals with public relations.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> For an excellent treatment of the role of the administrator in program improvement, see Roald F. Campbell and John A. Ramseyer, *The Dynamics of School-Community Relationships*, New York, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1955.

Another promising sign is the upgrading of school administrators by their own professional organization, the *American Association of School Administrators*. A movement is underway to require two years of graduate preparation for membership in the organization, and the nature of present preparation programs is being critically examined.<sup>23</sup>

Still another significant development is the work of the Kellogg Foundation in providing grants to regional universities for carrying on experiments designed to raise the quality of educational administration.

It is too early to evaluate the effects of these forward-looking movements. Perhaps not much in the way of tangible results in curriculum development may be expected as long as the present crisis in school population and its attendant problems continues. As long as the schools are under pressure to add courses (without examining the total program) in mathematics, science, and foreign languages "to get ahead of the Soviet Union" it is not likely that curriculum development will be more than a "broken-front" piecemeal affair.

*What Role Do Laymen Play in Determining School Policies and Programs?* The role which laymen play and should play in improving high-school education today must be viewed against the backdrop of the current socio-economic-political climate in which the schools operate. Without a doubt, this climate has engendered a vast and confusing array of criticisms of high-school education made by laymen—journalists, admirals, industrialists; and also by professional educators—mostly associated with the liberal arts colleges.<sup>24</sup> James B. Conant has this to say about the more recent criticisms and their effect upon the layman:

<sup>23</sup> See *Professional Administrators for America's Schools*, Thirty-eighth Yearbook, American Association of School Administrators, Washington, American Association of School Administrators, NEA, 1960.

<sup>24</sup> For good analyses of these criticisms see the following: C. Winfield Scott and Clyde M. Hill, eds., *Public Education Under Criticism*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954; C. Winfield Scott, Clyde M. Hill, and Hobert W. Burns, eds., *The Great Debate: Our Schools in Crisis*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1959; V. T. Thayer, *The Role of the School in American Society*, New York, Dodd, Mead and Company, 1960, Part IV; Myron Lieberman, *The Future of Public Education*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1960; Hyman G. Rickover, *Education and Freedom*, New York, E. P. Dutton and Company, 1959. For an excellent example of continued attacks on so-called "Progressive Education" and on professional educators, see the publications of the *Council for Basic Education*, particularly the *Bulletin*, edited by Mortimer Smith, issued by the *Council for Basic Education*, 725 Fifteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C.



To some degree the attention devoted to the shortcomings of our public schools by the media of mass communication in the last few years has tended to confuse the layman. So, too, have the writings of certain critics. The basis of the complaints was hardly new; indeed, to those of us who had been directly involved in education for many years, the stories were quite familiar. What Sputnik accomplished was to provide an attentive audience. Criticism of public education, particularly of the high schools, was good copy. In fact, in the closing months of 1957 and the beginning months of 1958, the more violently a speaker attacked the high school, the more certain he was to have his remarks appear with large headlines on page one.<sup>27</sup>

As was pointed out, this flood of criticism came, not only from people outside the profession, but also from university professors. Conant underscores this point in the following statement:

The truth of the matter is that some of the most virulent attacks on the American high schools have come from within the profession itself—from professors in universities. If a citizen hears the public high schools condemned by a professor, he is strongly inclined to believe the professor must be right. The layman may regard professors with suspicion when they talk about politics and economics, but surely a teacher in a university ought to know whether the high schools are good or bad. As a consequence of this attitude, one may encounter a parent who is satisfied with the local high school yet is quite willing to believe the worst about the national situation because he has read an article by Professor X.<sup>28</sup>

Educators themselves are sharply divided on such questions as:

What should be the role of the federal government in the support and control of public education?

How much emphasis should be placed upon the academic subjects, e.g., mathematics, science, foreign languages?

Should there be a common curriculum for all students?

Should the gifted student be segregated and provided with a special program?

Should students be sectioned homogeneously?

Who should go to college?

Should high schools be comprehensive or specialized?

Should foreign languages be taught in the elementary school?

It is to be expected, under such conditions, that there is confusion as

<sup>27</sup> James B. Conant, *The Child, The Parent, and the State*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1959, p. 59.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

to the role that the laymen should assume in determining policies and programs.

It is true that at the present time there are no clearly defined "ground rules" to guide the participation of laymen. Pressure groups spring up to promote or maintain special interests. Goaded on by national groups that know exactly what they want, well-meaning local citizen groups frequently take action that does harm to the schools. This is usually true when laymen undertake to act independently and out of relation to the professional group, e.g., school administrators, supervisors, and teachers.

On the other hand, distinguished service to the schools has been rendered by such groups as the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools.<sup>29</sup> In addition to functioning on the national level, this Commission has stimulated the organization of hundreds of local organizations by providing encouragement in the form of "Working Guides" which describe procedures for organizing for better schools. So effective has been the work of this Commission that it considers its "mission" accomplished and has disbanded.

Under the sponsorship of the Kellogg Foundation a number of noteworthy studies have been made of the participation of laymen in school improvement. One such study was recently carried out at The Ohio State University.<sup>30</sup> The results of this and other experimental studies tend to support the thesis that it is the professional educator's responsibility to initiate and direct lay participation if it is to have maximum effectiveness.

In spite of the continuing crises in education and the constant agitation of vested-interest groups, laymen's opinion polls seem to indicate that the public is fairly well satisfied with the schools and the products which they are turning out. The *National Education Association's Research Division* studied major public-opinion polls on education reported between January, 1950 and April, 1958. On the basis of these studies, the following conclusions were reached:

1. The public strongly endorses the basic goals of American education: First, to create an enlightened, loyal, and responsible electorate, and second, to provide all American children with an education appropriate to them as individuals.

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, David B. Dreiman, *How to Get Better Schools*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1956. This important book describes the work of the Commission and cites several case studies of school improvement initiated by laymen.

<sup>30</sup> See Campbell and Ramseyer, *op. cit.* This important book gives details as to how laymen may participate in school improvement programs. Chapter VI lists ten principles of effective lay participation.

2. Although there is widespread belief that something should be done to improve curriculum offerings in our schools, many persons do not hold definite opinions about what should be done.

3. For the most part, the American public is more convinced of the value of practical training than of the value of what is generally known as liberal education.

4. Educators are much more demanding of American education than is the general public.

5. To eliminate our crippling educational shortages, an overwhelming majority of the American public favors federal financial support for education.<sup>21</sup>

An interesting and significant point in the above report is that critics such as Mortimer Smith, Arthur Bestor, and Hyman Rickover, and organizations such as the Council for Basic Education seem not to have had much effect on the thinking of most Americans as to the kind of education they want for their children.

Spurred on by special interest organizations, lay groups sometimes campaign against bond issues for new buildings or increased tax levies for teachers salaries, but this is more of a protest against mounting tax rates than an outright opposition to the school program. Perhaps it would be fair to say that most laymen are inclined to leave the whole matter to professional educators. This, of course, is a mistake.

*Do Teacher-Education Institutions Play a Dominant Role in Curriculum-Reorganization Programs?* Naturally, we would expect teacher-education agencies to be centers for the development of new theories and practices. It has already been pointed out that at least part of the difficulty in changing teachers' attitudes is due to their academic and professional education. An examination of the program of institutions for the preparation of high-school teachers indicates that they are highly conventional. Usually the traditional separation between subject matter and method is to be found. Methods courses are frequently compartmentalized in terms of one aspect of a field. This policy successfully prevents any widespread deviation from existing practices in the high schools. Each subject is compartmentalized and taught by a specialist in that field. There has been little attempt to make the problems actually faced by schools and communities the center of the program. Actual school prob-

<sup>21</sup> Committee on Tax Education and School Finance, NEA, *Public Opinion Polls on American Education*, Washington, D.C., National Education Association, 1958, p. 5.

lems are given a minor emphasis in the rush to impart logical systems of knowledge. Accomplishment is in the form of courses taken and credits earned. Even the movement toward the unification of subject matter which has found rather general acceptance in elementary teacher-education circles has scarcely influenced high-school teacher education. It is difficult to find courses for high-school teachers that give adequate assistance in preparing them to teach core or fused courses.<sup>32</sup>

Most of these criticisms of public education center around teacher-educational institutions and teacher educators. These criticisms largely emanate from the "intellectuals" in the colleges and universities who charge that professional courses are largely a waste of time. What prospective teachers need, so they say, are more subject-matter courses and fewer "methods" courses. Implicit in many of the criticisms is the hoary aphorism—"if you know your subject you can teach it."<sup>33</sup>

Teacher educators are also castigated for initiating and maintaining a system of certification which calls for rigid professional requirements at the expense of academic requirements.

Many of the critics of teacher education (Admiral Rickover included) have a wholly erroneous view of the proportionate amount of time given over to the academic and professional aspects of the program. A recent study of 114 institutions accredited for the training of teachers by the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education<sup>34</sup> indicates that only 16 to 20 per cent of the four-year programs for the training of high-school teachers is devoted to professional courses, and 30 per cent of this time is allocated to student teaching. This seems to be a very small amount of time in which to acquire the attitudes, understandings, and skills of teaching. Yet it is probably true that since the study above was reported there has been a further decrease in the amount of

<sup>32</sup> See, Committee on the Preparation of Core Teachers, Harold Alberty, *ch.*, *The Preparation of Core Teachers for Secondary Schools*, ASCD Bulletin, Washington, D.C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA, 1955.

<sup>33</sup> For representative samples of the literature bearing on this controversy, see Scott and Hill, *op. cit.*, and Scott, Hill, and Burns, *op. cit.*

<sup>34</sup> Morris L. Cogan, "Professional Requirements in Collegiate Programs for the Preparation of High School Teachers," *The Education of Teachers: New Perspectives*, Report of the Second Bowling Green Conference of the National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards, June 1958. Washington, D.C., National Education Association, 1958, p. 320.

professional education. There would appear to be a trend toward even more emphasis upon the academic and less upon professional education. We seem to be moving away from the concept of unity of subject matter and method and toward an even sharper dichotomy. "The professional treatment of subject matter" which formerly held so much promise is receiving little emphasis. Professional programs are being moved to the upper division of the undergraduate programs, and experiments designed to restrict it entirely to the graduate school are receiving enthusiastic foundation support. Thus, teacher education in the foreseeable future seems destined to play an even more conservative role in preparing young people to live in our democratic society.

*What Influence Do College-Entrance Requirements Have Upon Curriculum Reorganization?* Since the traditional purposes of the high school centered around college preparation, it was to be expected that the high school would be greatly influenced by the demands of the colleges. The work of the Committee of Ten (1893) is a typical example of such influence. With the extension of the high-school program to include more and more of the youth population, college attendance ceased to be the aim of a large majority of students. At the present time, such preparation plays a subordinate role in the average high school even though the percentage of youth entering college has increased. Yet the program continues to be greatly influenced by college-entrance requirements. The group of educators who instituted the *Eight-Year Study* felt that the influence was sufficiently potent to justify a carefully controlled experiment to determine whether or not students could depart widely from conventional preparation and still succeed in college. The results of that experiment<sup>35</sup> indicated that the graduates of the experimental schools did slightly better than graduates of conventional schools who had equal mental ability and similar socioeconomic backgrounds. These results are known to the colleges and some have no doubt modified their programs as a result, but it will be a long time before the more conservative colleges will even listen to proposals for change.

With the "population explosion" and the sharp increase in enrollments, colleges and universities are becoming more selective and are moving rapidly in the direction of requiring academic tests as a condition

<sup>35</sup> See Dean Chamberlin, *et al.*, *Did They Succeed in College?* New York, Harper and Brothers, 1942, and Wilford Aikin, *The Story of the Eight-Year Study*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1941.

of entrance. Even state universities, which frequently are required by law to admit all graduates of fully accredited high schools, are seeking to find ways and means of limiting their enrollments by setting up entrance examinations. This testing movement, which is gaining ground rapidly, is bound to strengthen the hold of the colleges on the high-school curriculum.

The dangers of the increasing use of this program are well stated in the following quotation:

In spite of warnings by College Board officials about the limitations of the tests, the use of the tests often produce undesirable effects on the schools. A creative English teacher spent a full semester cramming her students for College Board examinations by dull drill on word derivation and vocabulary. Private coaching schools are springing up in many communities. Several boards of education in one area met to compare college board examination results in the misguided belief that they could thus identify strengths and weaknesses of their systems. . . . In an effort to improve their records in examinations, schools are urged to push high school subjects down into the junior high and elementary schools, where they do not belong. Too many admission officers are relying on college board scores as almost the sole factor in selection.

The qualifying tests for the National Merit Scholarships have also assumed broad scope. Once winners are announced, school patrons join a chorus of pride or complaint. . . . The school is urged to make a better record and this often results in a demand to eliminate everything that does not seem to point toward more successful test performance.<sup>36</sup>

As this movement of the colleges and universities toward devising instruments for greater selection spreads, their influence on the high-school curriculum is bound to increase. With the advent of the junior high school, embracing grades seven, eight, and nine, high-school educators thought they saw an opportunity to free the ninth grade from college domination. We now know that this was a false hope and have about decided to surrender. This dream of a three-year unit devoted to meeting the needs of all American youth has faded. Undoubtedly, the seventh and eighth grades as well as the upper elementary school, as Commissioner Raubinger pointed out, will be greatly influenced by the colleges and uni-

<sup>36</sup>Frederick Raubinger in a symposium with Robert Ebel, "A Nationwide Testing Program," *NEA Journal*, XLVIII, 29 (November, 1959). Readers will also want to read Dr. Ebel's argument in favor of nationwide testing. He is Vice-President of Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey.

versities. Witness the rapid spread of the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary school, the segregation of bright students to start preparation for advanced science and mathematics programs in the eighth grade, and the increased emphasis upon "guiding" bright students into college preparatory courses as early as the eighth grade. This movement is bound to receive added emphasis as a result of the studies of James B. Conant who has concluded, after visiting 125 junior high schools:

I have been convinced, also from what we have seen and heard, that the eighth grade should be departmentalized, with specialized teachers of the academic subjects (English, social studies, mathematics, science) and specialists in art, music, home economics, and industrial arts as well. And I am inclined to the view of those who feel that the seventh grade should be considered as transitional between the self-contained class of grades one through six and the fully departmentalized situation in grade eight. In the seventh grade I should advocate some departmentalization.<sup>27</sup>

## SUMMARY

1. The trend toward providing a secondary-school education for all American youth is not likely to be reversed by the clamor of those critics who would like to return to the period when the high-school population was a highly selected group. The faith of the American people in education is too strong to yield to the pressures to reduce the compulsory-education age and eliminate those who are not capable of high academic achievement.

2. Not enough progress has been made in defining and clarifying the goals of high-school education in our democratic culture to the end that the school may become an instrument for the continuous re-examination,

<sup>27</sup> James B. Conant, "A Look at the Junior High School," *Education Digest*, XXV, 1-2 (April, 1960). See also: James B. Conant, *Education in the Junior High School Years*, Princeton, N. J., Educational Testing Service, 1960, pp. 22-23. In this later report he advocates that a block of time be set aside, at least in grade seven, in which one teacher has the same pupils for two or more periods, generally in English and social studies. Otherwise grades seven, eight, and nine should be departmentalized; that is to say, pupils should have specialist teachers in each of the subject areas (p. 22). This recommendation, if carried out, sounds the death knell of the adolescent-problems core even in grade seven.

The departmentalization advocated by Conant, as well as his insistence on sectioning by subjects on the basis of academic ability (except in grade seven, where one teacher handles both English and social studies) is a divisive influence in the high school which may discourage growth and development of the junior high school and, perhaps unintentionally, open the door to further college domination.

reinterpretation, and refinement of the conditions which would enhance the quality of living for all. There is still too much emphasis upon subject-matter achievement as the goal of the educative process, and powerful forces are likely to exert considerable influence in reinforcing this trend.

3. The curriculum is, for the most part, subject-centered, and is largely determined by adopted textbooks and fixed courses of study. The trend toward basing the curriculum on the needs, problems, and interests of adolescents seems to be overshadowed by the present emphasis upon the needs, problems, and interests of the *State*—as evidenced by the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and the widespread demand for a "tougher" program to keep pace with totalitarian countries.

4. A great deal of experimentation which is underway in areas such as television, teaching machines, and recordings, is designed to make learning more effective and to bring about better staff utilization. It is an open question, however, whether the evolving procedures utilize the best that is known about the nature of the learner and the learning process, and the cultivation of the cherished values of the society.

5. The present demand for objectivity in evaluation procedures is, of course, commendable up to a certain point, but complete reliance on the results of standardized tests may well neglect the intangible but basic values which are the major goals of the educative process; thus the drive for "quality" may defeat its own commendable purpose. Segregation of the "academically talented," advanced placement programs, and proficiency examinations for college entrance, have values but they also have potential dangers which need to be watched.

6. Undoubtedly there has been vast improvement in school-building design over the past decade. Buildings are much better related to function, and the attempts to recapture the past in building design is giving way to a new conception of architecture, grounded in the present and future. School equipment, lighting, laboratories, and studios are better adapted to their use. Grounds are more spacious—even though much of them may be taken up by stadiums which are utilized only a part of the school year.

7. The teacher's role in curriculum-making is far from clear. There are many illustrations in the literature of widespread participation in curriculum development and of elaborate machinery set up to facilitate such participation, but rarely does one find school systems involving the staff in basic curriculum-development programs. More prevalent is the



"broken-front" procedure, in which a few teachers work together in improving some particular phase of the program, e.g., mathematics, science, foreign languages. This is, of course, commendable, but does not seem to be a satisfactory substitute for looking at the total program as it relates to school, community, and national goals. One misses such pioneering efforts as those of Denver, Virginia, Santa Barbara, and the laboratory schools associated with teacher-education institutions which promised so much in the decades of the Thirties and Forties. Perhaps new frontiers are in the process of emerging. Meanwhile, we shall hear more about national curriculums and textbooks prepared by experts and handed down to the classroom teachers.

8. Controversy still rages over the extent to which students are capable of participating in curriculum planning. In spite of the generally accepted principle that democracy is best taught by practicing it in the classroom, there is little evidence to show that students participate widely in classroom decisions, or that they desire to do so. The present emphasis on raising standards of subject-matter achievement, of "assigning" fifteen to twenty hours of homework as advocated by some "specialists," may well operate against democratic practices in the classroom and may even decrease the holding power of the high school.

9. There is a concerted, well-organized movement to improve the preparation of administrators for educational leadership. This may result in principals and superintendents playing a larger role in improving curriculum practices. Considerable stress has been placed upon techniques of bringing about better public relations between the school and the community, and this is certainly to be commended, but unless good public relations leads to curriculum and instructional improvement, the time spent on "cultivating" the public can hardly be justified.

10. Perhaps never before in the history of American education have laymen been bombarded with as much literature concerning the schools and what role they should play in formulating school policy. This has unquestionably resulted in widespread interest and has led to the formation of many study and action groups. Sometimes such groups operate without the guidance of professional personnel. When they do, the results are likely to be negative. This concern for the improvement of public education on the part of laymen presents a significant challenge to the school administrator, and he will have to approach the problem of lay participation creatively with no ready-made solutions. The extent and

level of lay participation is still one of the unsolved problems of public school administration. Is the public to "advise and consent"—or play a more dynamic role?

11. Teacher education has by no means escaped the sharp criticisms leveled at the program of public education. Teacher-education institutions and accrediting agencies have been criticized for allocating too much of the four-year teacher-preparation program to professional courses. This charge is, in most cases, not based upon reliable evidence. This movement is a *part* of the timeworn dichotomy between subject matter and "method," which term is used so broadly as to include practically all professional courses. Personnel are labelled *educators* if they hold academic degrees, and *educationists* if they hold degrees in the professional phases of education. Teacher-education institutions, by and large, have not met these challenges effectively.

12. The "population explosion" and the desire of more and more youths to attend college have brought about a real crisis in higher education. This crisis has not yet been adequately met by expanding present facilities, or by the establishment of branches of universities and/or junior or community colleges—though there are significant moves in this direction. Rather the trend is toward raising entrance requirements through objective examinations with a view to eliminating at least the lower third of the students of each graduating class. Unless more enlightened policies are developed than those which now seem to be generally followed, many young people in the decade ahead will be denied even the chance to prove their ability to carry on college work successfully.

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# *Laying the Foundation for Curriculum Development*



THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL: ITS PHILOSOPHY  
AND GOALS



EDUCATIONAL VALUES AND LEARNING THEORIES



THE ADOLESCENT IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

# 2

## *The American High School: its philosophy and goals*



IN THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER, a number of pertinent questions were raised concerning the high school as it functions in present-day American society. No attempt was made to evaluate present practices in light of specific criteria, but implicit in the discussion was the idea that some practices are more desirable than others. In other words it is possible to attach higher values to certain practices than to others. Such an appraisal would necessarily be based upon the values held to be paramount by the person or group making the appraisal. For want of a better name such a set of values may be referred to as a philosophy. When a philosophy gives direction to the educative process, we designate such direction as goals or objectives. In this chapter our purpose is to examine various concepts of philosophy and to arrive at some conclusions concerning what direction appears to be most promising for the future of our democratic way of life.

### THE MEANING OF PHILOSOPHY

Any discussion of philosophy and goals of education, as has been pointed out, must, of necessity, rest upon some concept of values. The nature of values was clearly stated many years ago by Joseph Justman and is quoted here in order to provide a basis for the discussion which follows:

Educational theories differ essentially with regard to the values that they accept and that they hold out as ends of the educative process. Such values

may be intelligence or faith, reason or experience, individuality or conformity, social need or individual right, self-restraint or self-expression, the familiar, the regular, the permanent, or the novel, the sudden, the changing. One's conception of the Good Life for man is a summation of such values; a conception of the educative process is an explanation of how these values may be achieved, and involves the establishment of values that are minor, less permanent, auxiliary—in short, instrumental values.

A value is, defined roughly, a "good," an object or action or quality or idea that one esteems highly, and that, in the conduct of living, one would prefer to other things as "worthy to be achieved." To value is to place an estimate upon objects or actions or qualities or ideas occurrent in one's experience for the guidance of one's living. The purpose of valuation is practical; a value motivates human action, affects human decisions, results in the doing of one thing rather than another. An estimate is placed on all things of which the human being becomes aware as affecting his living in some way. The conscious purpose in living then becomes to realize those things upon which a high valuation has been placed (the valued things, or the values) and correspondingly to avoid or to fail to realize those things upon which a low or a negative valuation has been placed (the non-valued things, or the non-values).<sup>1</sup>

It has often been said that every individual has a philosophy, but if by that is meant a consistent, unified set of values or preferences which give meaning to action, we are forced to admit that the statement is only a half-truth. On all sides we see human action that obviously is based upon trial and error, caprice, or a blind following of tradition, and hence does not have the quality of either unity or consistency. On the other hand, it is probably true that every individual does have certain preferences, certain things that are more highly prized, certain desires that are warmer, more dynamic than others to which he gives allegiance and which somehow form a rough pattern for living. We may call this pattern his outlook, or philosophy. It is a far cry, of course, from the chaotic values that characterize the philosophy of the average individual, to the aspiration of the philosopher to "comprehend the universe, not simply piecemeal or by fragments, but somehow as a whole." But, fundamentally, the basic idea is the same for the professional philosopher and the so-called common man. Philosophy involves the cultivation of a set of values which serves as a guide to conduct.

Thus, when we speak of the philosophy of a school we refer to the

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Justman, *Theories of Secondary Education in the United States*, Teachers College, Columbia University Contributions to Education, No. 814, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1940, pp. 10-11.

purposes that give direction to the activities which it sponsors, to the beliefs which the teaching staff holds concerning the development of human personality, to its conception of the nature of the good life in our society. From this point of view, we can readily see that some schools, like individuals, may possess a hodgepodge of conflicting, confused values that lead in no particular direction. Others may be very certain of the goals toward which they are moving, even though such goals might not be accepted as valid by many educators. Still others may be found that are consciously setting goals that are consistent with our democratic tradition.

Some educators hold that a school should have no established philosophy, on the ground that this would lead to the indoctrination of the students—a practice which is held to be contrary to democracy itself. Students, so it is claimed, should come in contact with many philosophies and then be free to make up their minds as to what they believe. This point of view has considerable merit if what is meant by philosophy is a set of dogmas which is held to be inviolate and which excludes competing points of view. On the other hand, the insistence that a school have no philosophy, that it must not indoctrinate, that it must let the student make up his mind, *is in effect a philosophy*. We might even call such a point of view an expression of the philosophy of democracy. Thus philosophy is "dismissed at the front door, only to find its way back in through the kitchen."

## THE SEARCH FOR A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Throughout the ages, attempts have been made to give direction to the educative process by means of systems of values or philosophies. It is beyond the scope of this volume to deal exhaustively with any of them. In passing, however, several of the major classifications of philosophical systems are mentioned briefly. Traditionally, the major philosophies which have had important bearings upon educational theory and practice (apart from strictly religious formulations) are *idealism*, *realism*, and *pragmatism or instrumentalism*.<sup>2</sup> These basic philosophies deal with such

<sup>2</sup> For systematic analyses of these and other philosophies and their impact on education, see: Joseph Justman, *op. cit.*; J. S. Brubacher, *Modern Philosophies of Education*, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1939; *Philosophies of Education*. Forty-first Yearbook, Part I, National Society for the Study of Education. Bloomington, Ill., Public School Publishing Co., 1942; *Modern Philosophies*



concepts as *metaphysics*, the nature of the universe; *epistemology*, the theory of knowledge, and the relation of the human "mind" to the universe; and *ethics*, which involves the principles for the guidance of individual and social action. There are so many variations in point of view within each of the broad philosophical systems that it is dangerous to attempt to ascribe any specific set of beliefs to them. However, in the broadest sense, the Idealist or Humanist holds to the existence of reality apart from man, but man is endowed with a mind which has the power to reason and thus make some sense of the universe. He thus builds a system of values based upon his own experience and the heritage of the race. Through mind, he searches out "first principles" pertaining to goodness, truth, and beauty, which are eternal and absolute. These then become the foundation stones of education. The Realist tends to accept the existence of reality apart from man as a knower. He seeks knowledge; not primarily for the purpose of discovering "first principles" or eternal verities, but rather for its instrumental value in the conduct of living. He tends to place society above the individual and considers education as a matter of social adjustment. The Pragmatist, or Experimentalist, tends to reject the concept of a universe apart from man's existence. He holds that whatever man knows or can know about the world is derived solely from his own and race experience through the method of intelligence. The individual, his nature, needs, and his optimal development is the paramount good. The good society and hence the good education is one that fosters the growth and development of the individual.

It must be admitted that, significant as the classical formulations of philosophy may be for the research scholar in seeking to get at the fundamental outlooks in historical perspective, these formulations have lost

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and Education, Fifty-fourth Yearbook, Part I, National Society for the Study of Education, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1955; Theodore Brameld, *Philosophies of Education in Cultural Perspective*, New York, The Dryden Press, 1955; J. D. Butler, *Four Philosophies and Their Practices in Education and Religion*, Revised Edition, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1957. It will be noted in these volumes that a host of "new" philosophies have come into being, some of which are merely different labels. Thus, humanism is roughly synonymous with idealism; social realism, a term coined by Justman, is actually realism; perennialism is Brameld's term for idealism or humanism. Pragmatism, because of its reliance upon science, is often referred to as experimentalism. On the other hand, reconstructionism, essentialism, existentialism, and the like, represent relatively discrete points of view.

much of their usefulness in determining the role of American education today. Several education-oriented writers have developed classifications of philosophical outlook that should receive attention in this brief survey.

One of the first attempts to formulate categories for philosophical outlook appropriate for secondary education was made by Joseph Justman<sup>3</sup> in 1940. This he did by examining the writings of individuals and groups that seemed to present a fairly common point of view. He found, of course, that even among writers with similar points of view there were wide divergences on specific points. Nevertheless he was able to identify four schools of thought. His next step was to examine each of these "generalized theories" in terms of their influences for: (1) The Social Dynamics of Secondary Education, (2) The Psychological Foundations of Secondary Education, (3) The Meaning of Secondary Education, and (4) The Method of Secondary Education. The following are the "theories" with brief statements describing the nature of each:

*Humanism.* This theory views man as apart from and above nature, by virtue of the fact that he is endowed with a mind by means of which he provides for his own security and gains greater control over his environment. The "unit of living" is the individual life and as such is more important than society. As mind is central to control over the environment, so training in the development of mind is central to secondary education.<sup>4</sup>

*Social Evolutionism.* This theory, unlike humanism, views man as a part of nature. He is merely a "highly developed organism with a nervous system that makes it possible to develop this genius that we call mind for guiding and securing his adjustment to nature." This capacity to adjust to the environment and to profit from the experience of the past is what makes cultural improvement possible. The good life and hence the good education seeks to inculcate in all individuals the significant learnings that have been gleaned from man's long climb to higher adjustment levels.

*Social Realism.* This theory emphasizes that man is born into society. He must adjust to the values that are dominant in his society. As he adjusts to society, which is ever-changing, he may also participate in the

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*; the interpretations which follow are taken largely from the summaries presented in pp. 1-54.

<sup>4</sup> For the references used by Justman to support his interpretations of the various theories of secondary education, see: *Ibid.*, pp. 459-471.

task of improving his society. This he does through the application of scientific method, supplemented by beliefs which are validated in the process of living. The good education, then, is one that facilitates the adjustment of the individual to the society, and helps him to discover new values and refine old ones "in harmonious social cooperation with others" to improve his society.

*Experimentalism.* This theory emphasizes the dynamic character of the individual and expresses faith in his potentialities. It is the business of society to make possible the optimal development of the individual. To the extent that it fails to do this, it is at fault. Man, in concert with his fellows utilizing the method of science, should be continuously on the lookout for the means of removing the offending conditions. The values of the past are never to be thought of as fixed and final, but rather as hypotheses to refine present individually held values. Thus, the good education seeks to help the individual to realize his fullest potentialities through the application of the method of intelligence (broad scientific method) to the solution of all individual and group problems of living. Individuals so educated will cooperate with other individuals in creating a society more congenial to human development.

In 1950, Brameld<sup>2</sup> presented a classification that is somewhat at variance with Justman's analysis. In reality, his classification serves the purpose of a background for expressing his own outlook, which is explored fully in his writings. His classification follows:

*Eclecticism.* This philosophy combines elements of many philosophies. The Eclecticist repudiates the idea that a satisfactory outlook on life can be developed by adhering to any one systematic philosophy. Rather he seeks what is good in each of them and attempts to weave these elements into some consistent unified pattern.

*Essentialism,* the second category, holds that education should be based upon the heritage of the race in the form of organized knowledge, facts, and skills that have stood the test of time.

*Progressivism,* the third position, advances the idea that learning is

<sup>2</sup>Theodore Brameld, *Ends and Means in Education: A Midcentury Appraisal*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1950. See also his later books: *Patterns of Educational Philosophy: A Democratic Interpretation*, New York, World Book Co., 1951, and *Philosophies of Education in Cultural Perspective*, New York, The Dryden Press, 1955, *Education for the Emerging Age: Newer Ends and Stronger Means*, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1961.

not passive absorption but the progressive reconstruction of experience through the use of reflective thinking and, where applicable, the scientific method. The school in this view would be dedicated to the setting up of life situations in which the answers to individual and group problems are found by formulating and testing hypotheses.

*Perennialism*, the fourth position, finds its orientation in the past and holds that a sound education should be based upon the spirit and ideals of education during the Middle Ages. As Brameld expresses it, the Perennialist believes that "the supreme aim of education is to train intellectual leaders so brilliantly endowed with the intuitive capacity to recognize first principles that we may, for the first time in centuries, be led out of the darkness that threatens to engulf mankind, and into the light of rationally determined order."<sup>6</sup>

*Reconstructionism*. The concept of reconstructionism probably had its beginnings in a revolt within the Progressive Education Association. In 1932 a group of prominent leaders within the association sought to shift the emphasis from a child-centered to a society-centered orientation. George Counts issued his famous pamphlet<sup>7</sup> in which he challenged the association to "fashion a compelling and challenging vision of human destiny and become less frightened than it is today at the bogies of imposition and indoctrination."<sup>8</sup> A year later the Association's Committee on Social-Economic Problems issued another historic document<sup>9</sup> which called upon teachers to "recognize the corporate and the interdependent character of the contemporary order, and transfer the democratic tradition from individualistic to collectivistic economic foundations." The statement also proposed that education should "point toward a production and distribution system managed in the interests of all who labor and toward a society marked by comparative equality of material conditions and dominated by the ideal of guaranteeing to every child born in the nation the fullest opportunity for personal growth."<sup>10</sup> In 1947, the Association, which in 1944 changed its name to the American Education Fellowship, adopted an official platform or policy which was proposed

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>7</sup> *Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order?* New York, John Day Company, 1932.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> *A Call to the Teachers of the Nation*, New York, John Day Company, 1933.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

by Brameld and others. This policy reflected the views set forth in his 1950 statement<sup>11</sup> in which he presents the philosophy of reconstructionism as follows:

. . . Reconstructionism agrees up to a point with the perennialist: there is desperate need for clarity and certainty, for our civilization is beset with frustration and bewilderment. It radically disagrees, however, with perennialism's solution. Instead of returning to the Middle Ages, it would attempt to build the widest possible consensus or agreement about the supreme aims which should govern mankind in the reconstruction of world culture. These aims can be delineated through cooperative search: indeed, the reconstructionist is concerned that already there is a growing consensus or agreement about their most basic characteristics. The world of the future should be a world which the common man rules not merely in theory but in fact. It should be a world in which technological potentialities already clearly discernible are released for the creation of health, abundance, security for the great masses of every color, every creed, every nationality. It should be a world in which national sovereignty is utterly subordinated to international authority. In short, it should be a world in which the dream of both ancient Christianity and modern democracy are fused with modern technology and art into a society under the control of the great majority of the people who are rightly the sovereign determiners of their own destiny. Reconstructionism is thus a philosophy of magnetic foresight, a philosophy of ends attainable through the development of powerful means possessed latently by the people. To learn how to exercise that power for these ends is the first priority of education.<sup>12</sup>

Brameld proposes to bring about this consensus by having the "profession of teachers" focus upon two "great constructive purposes":

(1) to channel the energies of education toward the reconstruction of the economic system—a system which should be geared with the increasing socializations and public controls now developing in England, Sweden, New Zealand and other countries; a system in which national and international planning of production and distribution replaces the chaotic planlessness of traditional free enterprise. . . . (2) To channel the energies of education toward the establishment of a genuine international order—an order in which

<sup>11</sup> Brameld, *op. cit.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 16–17. The passage quoted appears unchanged in Brameld's latest book: *Education for the Emerging Age: Newer Ends and Stronger Means*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1961, p. 25. For a discerning review of this book, see Maxine Green, "Newer Ends and Stronger Means," *Saturday Review*, XLIV, 64–65 (May 20, 1961).

national sovereignty is always subordinate to international authority in all questions affecting peace and security. . . .<sup>13</sup>

If the potential design "of the new society ever comes into being, it will be because we recognize the "powerful potentials of the constructive forces now discernible. Opportunity exists for us to throw our loyalties and energies on the side of these constructive forces. Education, reinforced by the assets already at hand and guided by a culture-oriented, goal-centered theory, can also grasp that opportunity while time still remains."<sup>14</sup>

Still another way of looking at differences in philosophical outlook is suggested by Woodring:<sup>15</sup> There is, first of all, the group of which Vice-Admiral Rickover has become the spokesman. This group believes that

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 190-191, *passim*. This statement does not appear in *Education for the Emerging Age*, but the point of view is clearly reflected. In this volume, he says that the present era

"is likely to be distinguished from all earlier eras by at least these fundamental features: a largely automatic, integrated technology powered increasingly by atomic energy; a world population sufficiently educated to regulate its own growth according to available resources; a publicly planned and directed system of distribution of these resources so that physical and spiritual deprivation due to inequitable distribution of goods is eliminated; and an enforceable international government under democratic and, as far as possible, decentralized control." (p. 32).

<sup>14</sup> *Education for the Emerging Age*, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39. The question of whether this educational program can be carried out without indoctrination has been debated since the 1947 policy statement of the American Education Fellowship. At that time critics accused the organization of advocating the indoctrination of students into some form of socialism or collectivism. In fact, the policy undoubtedly contributed to the further decline of the organization since many teachers and administrators were afraid to be identified with it. For a complete history of the rise, decline, and fall of the Progressive Education Association, see Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School*, New York, Alfred Knopf & Co., Inc., 1961. Brameld claimed then, and insists now, that the new order is to be brought about through "uncoerced persuasion" or "defensible partiality"; not by indoctrination. He argued this point forcefully in 1950 and reinforces his argument in the present volume. See Chapter XV entitled, "Shall the Schools Indoctrinate?" Like the present authors many people will doubtless remain unconvinced. For one such person, see Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 61. She says: "Brameld is an avowed enemy of indoctrination, but there is, nonetheless, an implication in his book that he has 'seen the future,' and that the obligation of the schools is to make that future visible to all."

<sup>15</sup> Paul Woodring, "The Goals of Education," *Saturday Review*, XLIII, 47-48 (December 17, 1960). Presented as an introduction to the Gardner Report on *National Goals in Education*—a section of the Report of the President's Commission on National Goals. *Goals for Americans*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960.

"we must shift the emphasis from personal to national goals. Alarmed by the threat of atomic annihilation, they see national survival as an end—perhaps *the* end of education. . . . only an improved educational system specifically designed to select and produce scientific and technological talent and leadership can save us."<sup>16</sup>

Second, and at the other extreme, is a relatively small group of professional educators "who see the child's adjustment to his social environment and the predicament in which he finds himself as the major goal of education."<sup>17</sup> The *life-adjustment* philosophy, originally intended for students who could not profit substantially from a study of the academic disciplines, has been used, the writer points out, "to justify a less vigorous education even for those fully capable of achieving high standards."<sup>18</sup>

"Old-fashioned progressive educators" and the Humanists are somewhere in between the Rickover and life-adjustment groups. They are similar in that the progressive believes in the schools' responsibility for the whole child, and the Humanists emphasize the development of the whole man, who presumably is just a "whole child grown up." These groups, in the opinion of the writer, have failed to distinguish between the limited goals of the school as an institution which the child attends part time for a few years, and the broader goals of a lifetime of experience, in and out of school.

A fourth point of view or philosophical outlook presented by the writer is that of the Classicists. They hold that the long-range goal of education is cultural continuity. "Through his education the child should become fully familiar with the experiences of man's past in order that he may become a part of his own culture. A knowledge of the history, literature, art, and science of the past is held to be the best possible preparation for the future because it enables us to build on the past and to avoid the mistakes of our ancestors."<sup>19</sup>

Woodring, far from being eclectic, believes that "some decision about priorities is essential in order that teachers may know where to place the greatest emphasis."<sup>20</sup> Just who is to make that decision is not clear—perhaps the American people.

It should be fairly obvious from the preceding discussion that the

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>17</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>18</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>20</sup> *Loc. cit.*

search for a philosophy of education is a never-ending quest. It should also be evident that there are diversities in the interpretation of these philosophical outlooks in terms of educational goals.

#### **THE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY AS A BASIS FOR DETERMINING EDUCATIONAL GOALS**

It could certainly be argued that all of the philosophies described briefly in the preceding section are roughly within the broad framework of democracy, but how effectively any one of them implements the basic values is a matter of controversy. Perhaps educators, rather than accept any of the systematic philosophies as the basis for direction, should examine more closely the appropriateness of basing the school's program upon the major tenets of democracy. The authors of this volume support the proposition that our conception of the goals of high-school education inevitably grows out of an interpretation of the meaning of our own particular design for living. This is true of any culture, for it can be shown that the schools reflect in a general way the values that are cherished by a culture. Sometimes the reflection is distorted by uncertainty, confusion, or a superficial understanding of the deeper meaning of the culture, but even though practices are inconsistent and confused, they are usually defended by some interpretation of the cultural ideals that are generally accepted. This, of course, is true of totalitarian countries where the schools serve as an agency for furthering the concepts of racial superiority, supremacy of the state, perpetuation of the power of the dictator, and other ideals with which we are all too familiar. If the schools of Germany failed in any respect to carry out the program of Hitler and his satellites, it was because those in charge of the schools did not understand it, rather than because there was any opportunity for the expression of ideological differences. And the task was fairly simple since the translation of the Nazi ideology was a matter of inculcating emotional allegiance through a thoroughgoing program of indoctrination, quite divorced from intelligent action or personal preference. In the Soviet Union, according to what little evidence is available, the situation is the same. Freedom of teaching is nonexistent. The educational system is but a reflection of the state.

The problem of education in a democratic society is quite different.



A pronouncement of the faculty of the College of Education at The Ohio State University makes this point clear:

The fact that the public schools of America are free schools places upon them distinctive responsibilities. They were created by determined people experienced in the ways of freedom. Such people know that the battle for freedom is a continuing one. They know that freedom, difficult to gain, is easily lost. They want to be heard on all important issues. They should be heard, and, in America, they will be heard. But no group can properly insist that its doctrines or opinions be imposed upon the young in the American school.

The public schools of America belong not to boards of education, nor to teachers, nor to groups of influential citizens, but to all the people. No public school can withdraw from or neglect this relationship to the people who support it. School officials, teachers and parents, and the public generally, are partners in a common enterprise: to help each child develop into an independent person who can think for himself, reach his own judgments, choose his own goals, and play his proper part as an effective citizen.

An educational program that emphasizes these purposes has no place for an authoritarian blueprint, even though this be formulated by wise individuals or well-intentioned groups. The *working plans* of the good society are never the product of an individual or of a clique. No faculty of any school, and no single group in any community, possesses the wisdom, or the authority, or the responsibility to make such plans. The distinctive characteristic of a free world is the encouragement given to all to participate in the planning of the common life. This is no less true of educational planning than it is of all other planning that free men do.<sup>21</sup>

In order to carry out a policy such as that enunciated it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the commitments of democracy and what those commitments mean for a school program. Counts puts the matter succinctly in the following statement:

We in America, in my judgment, have never given adequate thought to the development of an education that is suited to our democracy, particularly in the present industrial age. If we ever do, the result will be something new in the history of education. It will express at the same time both the emphasis upon knowledge, understanding and enlightenment and the cultivation of the basic ethical values of democracy—devotion to equality, individual worth, intellectual freedom, political liberty, democratic processes, general welfare, and the mastery of relevant knowledge. All this must be done in

<sup>21</sup> "A Statement by the Faculty, College of Education, The Ohio State University," *Educational Research Bulletin*, XXX, 225-226 (December 12, 1951).

terms of the realities of the contemporary age. The major difficulty which all democracies confront here is *the achievement through the democratic process of an educational program designed to strengthen democracy.*<sup>22</sup>

If, then, what we strive to accomplish in education is to make our schools the finest possible exemplification of democratic living, and an agency for the understanding and continuous reinterpretation and refinement of the ideals that characterize our way of life as unique and distinctive, those who are concerned with the program of the school—administrators, teachers, pupils, and community groups must seek to discover the deeper ideals and values to which we as a people give our wholehearted allegiance.

What then is democracy? It must be recognized at the outset that there are few basic principles upon which those who seek to interpret democracy wholly agree. This is probably as it should be. Democracy is not merely a form of government but a way of living together in a highly complex society which is undergoing rapid change. Our institutions, our social and economic programs, our standards of ethics and morality are in a constant state of reinterpretation. Upon the nature of these interpretations, free men are bound to disagree. In fact, it is out of these disagreements that clarity and common plans of action arise. All of the avenues of communication must be kept open.

There is one concept about which we are in fair agreement. *As a people, we believe in the optimal development of human personality.* This thread seems to run through the history of all democratic peoples. It is generally agreed that all forms of social organization, of government, of arrangements for living together ought to foster the fullest and most complete development of *all* individuals. The test of contemplated action ought to be: "Does the proposed action foster the richest possible living for everyone?"

Nowhere has this concern for the individual been better expressed than in the following statement:

A concern for the realization of individual potentialities is deeply rooted in our moral heritage, our political philosophy, and the texture of our daily customs. *It is at the root of our effort to eliminate poverty and slums at home and to combat disease and disaster throughout the world.* The enthusi-

<sup>22</sup> George S. Counts, "Education for Democracy," *The Phi Delta Kappan*, XXX, 223 (February, 1949). (Italics added.)

asm with which Americans plunge into projects for human betterment has been considered by some critics to be foolishly optimistic. But though we may have gone to extremes in a known belief that we could cure all of mankind's ills, we need not be ashamed of the impulse. It springs from our deepest values. We do not believe that men were meant to live in degradation and we are foes of the poverty and ignorance which produces that result. We deplore the destruction of human potentialities through disease, and we are prepared to fight such destruction wherever we meet it. We believe that man, by virtue of his humanity, should live in the light of reason, exercise moral responsibility, and be free to develop to the full the talents that are in him.

Our devotion to a free society can only be understood in terms of these values. It is the only form of society that puts at the very top of the agenda the opportunity of the individual to develop his potentialities. It is the declared enemy of every condition that stunts the intellectual, moral and spiritual growth of the individual.<sup>23</sup>

This concept must not be interpreted as rugged individualism, or as *laissez faire*, for individuals in a complex technological, and therefore interdependent, society, cannot develop through the violation or ruthless destruction of the personalities of others. The test, therefore, is in reality a *social* one in the sense that human action must ultimately find its justification in the extent to which such action enhances the living of *all* individuals who are touched by it. This introduces the concept of intelligence which is part and parcel of the way of life which we call democratic. We have faith in the intelligence of the common man, faith that he has the potentialities which when developed make it possible for him to solve his problems by setting up hypotheses, marshaling data, and drawing conclusions that are at least relatively free from caprice or whim. In other words, we have faith that once the ideal of the enhancement of human personality is accepted, it becomes the criterion by means of which the individual tests his conclusions and arrives at plans for action. Once we deny that human beings can so act, democracy will languish and die, and in its place must be substituted a form of organization in which those who have power may dictate, for better or for worse, the actions of their fellow men.

To put the matter briefly, democracy may be interpreted to embrace three interrelated ideals:

<sup>23</sup> *The Pursuit of Excellence—Education and the Future of America*, Special Studies Project Report V, Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Garden City, New York, Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1958, p. 1. See also: *Goals for Americans*, the Report of the President's Commission on National Goals, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960, Part I.

1. It is a form of social organization that holds that the optimal development of the individual—of all individuals—is the highest good.
2. Man can achieve his highest possible development only through acting in concert with his fellows, each individual being sensitive to the effects of his acts upon others.
3. That optimal development of *all* can be realized only to the extent that people have faith in intelligence as a method of solving individual and group problems.

**Democratic ideals in action** The test of the value of any theoretical formulation lies in its application. Obviously democracy is a set of ideals which has never yet been fully attained, but we do have sufficient evidence to justify our continued allegiance. To the furtherance of these ideals, we can well apply all our genius as a people. Since democracy is a faith, a promise, we cannot hope ever to *prove by scientific experiment that it is valid. We can only try in everything we do to further it—at least* until we find that in the very nature of human beings the ideals cannot be made to work. At the present time, we have no reason to believe that they cannot be made to work. On the contrary, our experience in living and working together as a people is rich in evidence that the ideals are practicable. The fact that the evidence leaves much room for further improvement is a challenge, rather than a confession of defeat. We need only mention a few of the gains that have been made.

We have been freed from the notion that human nature is a fixed entity—that large masses of human beings are committed inevitably to a particular role in society or to a world of poverty, war, crime, or economic or social stratification. We have evidence that the lot of the individual and of mankind is definitely improvable through the application of intelligence to human living. (Regardless of the fact that individual potentialities are vastly different, we are beginning to realize that the environment in which human beings develop has an important bearing upon the development of these potentialities. The concept of the static intelligence quotient belongs to another day. While man is definitely limited by his biological equipment, we have not yet begun to tap the possibilities which are open to him, given the opportunity for him to learn and develop. Thus, psychology and biology, while they do not imply or underwrite democratic values, do tend to justify our democratic faith in the intelligence of the common man and his ability to build a better world.

Science has provided us with the techniques for improving physical health, for extending the span of living, for so increasing the production of goods that an economy of abundance can now be realized. That science has also provided us with instruments of destruction by means of which civilization may obliterate itself is no indictment of science, but rather is a challenge to our creative intelligence to devise a scheme of controls that will make possible the extension of the fruits of scientific research to all of our people. Skeptical as we may be of the possibilities of bringing about a lasting peace through the UN and its kindred organizations, the UN does represent a tangible asset in the struggle of the free world to make democracy work.

We are evolving a new concept of government that holds that through the appropriate delegation of power, we may use government to improve the socioeconomic conditions of all our people. Slum-clearance and housing programs, the extension of electrification to millions of people, extensive highway construction, public-works programs, flood and erosion control projects, and soil conservation and improvement programs are now commonplace. We accept such extensions as steps toward the realization of a richer life for all—consequently as evidence that real democracy can be made to work.

We no longer seriously consider turning over these vast programs to private interests. Rather the issue is how to carry them out effectively within the framework of the so-called American system of free enterprise. There are honest differences as to the extent that government should exercise power, but these differences are settled at the ballot box after free and open discussion.

In the field of capital-labor relations, too, we have a striking illustration of the new role of government. We have found that the truly democratic techniques of group conference, discussion, and decisions cooperatively arrived at can be made to work. It would be easy to point to the failure of negotiations, to the selfishness of both capital and labor, to the prevalence of strikes, to unfair employment practices, particularly with respect to racial and minority groups, as evidence of the failure of government regulation, but gradually we are evolving new and more effective procedures, which have for their purpose the extension of the benefits of technology, and which deny the right of any special group or class to act against the public interest.

The fact that we hold free elections; that the press is still free to

present *all* the news, and to espouse any political point of view or program of action that is within the broad framework of democracy; that individuals may likewise exercise political, social, and religious freedom, is evidence that it is possible even in times of crisis to respect human personality. And all this is in striking contrast to the totalitarian states where these basic freedoms are dead.

The gains that have been made in implementing the ideal of optimal development of all are not automatic, and in a divided world they could easily be lost unless we continue to fight to preserve them. Our public schools, being the principal agency for interpreting and refining our ideals, have a responsible and important role to play.

Just what this role ought to be is a matter of controversy. We shall examine a number of conflicting conceptions.

#### THE GOALS OF AMERICAN SECONDARY EDUCATION — THE GREAT DEBATE

It is perhaps fair to conclude that "the great debate" now in progress concerning the direction that secondary education should take is not based exclusively—often not even primarily—upon the cleavages between the systematic schools of philosophical thought discussed earlier in this chapter. Rather they grow out of deep concerns as to how democracy, variously interpreted, can best be served by the schools. These concerns are to some extent a product of world tension. We, as a people, are far from certain as to our role in the world of the future. We are currently engaged, with other peoples of the so-called free world, in a life and death struggle with a powerful competing ideology with a totally different outlook on life. And the battle lines are constantly shifting. We no longer know precisely who our friends and allies are. The outcome of the struggle to win the "uncommitted" countries will not be known for a long time. Meanwhile, even our tenuous feeling of security which grew out of our fancied superiority in atomic weapons is gradually being dissipated. It is predicted that within a relatively short period many nations will be producing nuclear weapons—some of these nations are our friends and some our potential enemies. This means a sharp shift of alignment in the power struggle. Without a workable system of international controls, the confusion of America's role in the world is bound to increase. The consequences for America of the shift from a "bi-polar"

world to a "plural" world are discussed at length by two experts on foreign policy. They point out that "the present decade will witness the decline of the United States and the Soviet Union in relation to the rest of the world." It will also witness the emergence of new centers of power and perhaps "new tyrannies"; "it will witness a fundamental change in the sources of national power, the waning of the industrial hegemony of Europe and North America and the emergence of a world where sheer size and volume of production will be a commonplace and national quality will be what counts."<sup>24</sup>

In this world revolution which is now going on some people are questioning our ability to compete successfully with other cultures. It is charged that our advanced technology has brought a distaste for the hard vigorous work which was characteristic of America in an earlier time. We have lost our pioneer spirit. This view is dramatically expressed in the following passage:

We are in direct rivalry with nations which may not possess our money but which have an amazing constructive vitality. Every American should be familiar with Voltaire's oft-quoted aphorism, "History is but the pattern of silken slippers descending the stairs to the thunder of hobnailed boots, climbing upward from below"—which is just as appropriate for nations as it is for classes of society. It is nothing new for a vigorous race, adventurous and imaginative, industrious and stoical, to win a place in the sun and have visions of world domination. The pattern from then on is familiar. With prosperity, play and pleasure seen more attractive than hard work, and a drop in morale is inevitable. Then is the precise moment when a fresh people, barbarian perhaps but willing to endure hardships and make sacrifices, has often risen and overthrown the enervated and demoralized older society. . . . The symptoms of deterioration are all around us in our apprehensions, our frequent hysteria, our willingness to think that all our sins can be redeemed by an increased budget. . . . Let us through every possible agency determine just where we stand and just what is required to restore the pioneer spirit. Only by drastic measures can we reverse a trend so reminiscent of what has happened to earlier empires.<sup>25</sup>

*National survival as a major goal of education* Whether or not we accept the extreme view expressed above, it must be admitted that our

<sup>24</sup> Edmund Sullman and William Pfaff, "A New Start in Foreign Policy," *Harper's Magazine*, CCXXII, 32 (January, 1961).

<sup>25</sup> Claude Fuess, "Money Is Not Enough," *Saturday Review*, XLI, 10-12, *passim* (February 1, 1958).

anxieties over the outcome of the struggle for power now going on in every part of the globe is having a profound effect upon our educational system, and upon the views of many Americans as to what the goals of education should be. What education is most likely to facilitate (if not guarantee) the survival of democracy? Is the Soviet system of education superior to ours? Are our schools tough enough to turn out an intellectual product that can stand up against the product of schools which are based upon the authoritarian conception of life? These are questions that are being asked by educators, political leaders, and laymen.

One educator, Claude Fuess, whom we quoted earlier, is greatly concerned about this problem. He states emphatically that:

*If what we believe to be our American culture is to be preserved, it will be through the research, the resourcefulness, and the influence of a comparatively small group of talented persons. Subjecting a larger and larger proportion of our youth to elementary mathematical and scientific instruction will not accomplish what we are after. It is essential that every American child should learn to read and write and cipher. But it is ever more desirable at the moment that the best should get the best. For the moment we should be more concerned with the uncommon than with the average. Selecting the best qualified, educating them to the highest level of which they are capable, and then using them as their genius directs—this is the policy which might conceivably save us from destruction. Some one said recently, "A keen mind has become a resource more valuable than uranium. . . . The crying need of our country today is the trained mind, the skilled worker, the creative thinker."<sup>26</sup>*

The concern of the educator quoted above for the cultivation of talent is understandable and might well be endorsed, but a possible implication of this position is that we should cultivate talent at the expense of those students who are "average." In other words, it might be questioned whether or not such a redirection of our goals would violate the democratic principle of equality of opportunity for all. It is questionable that we can successfully cope with conflicting ideologies by ignoring our own democratic commitments. This point is made succinctly in a recent statement:

*If America chooses to combat the ideologies prevalent in today's world by means that conflict with American ideals, America cannot remain free.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.



America is committed to freedom of the individual—freedom from tyranny, ignorance, fear, superstition. America is committed to the belief that each person can choose his own way of living and, at the same time, live within a framework of basic national commitments. In carrying out this ideal, America stands foremost in the world. The state and all its institutions—especially the schools—exist to serve this purpose. Even the problem of the national need for skilled manpower is solved by assuring the nation's children the opportunity to develop a galaxy of diverse interests and great ranges of specific individual capacities.<sup>27</sup>

Development of the intellect as a major goal of high-school education Obviously the large group of educators and laymen that believes that the major—perhaps the only goal—of education is the cultivation of the intellect also has in mind the goal of national survival. And many of those who are the most vociferous in charging that the American secondary school is not meeting the Soviet challenge would remedy the situation by instituting a rigorous academic program designed to “train the mind.” It is also true that many critics of the American secondary school, who have long deplored what they term anti-intellectualism, now use the threat of Soviet domination to make their claims stand out more clearly and forcefully. They want a heavier emphasis placed upon the mastery of the academic subjects. Consequently it is not possible to differentiate clearly between the two groups. Nevertheless, it seems desirable to focus briefly upon the group that emphasizes development of the intellect as the major goal of education—particularly secondary and higher.

One of the most outspoken advocates of rigorous mental training, oddly enough, is not an educator but a scientist. We refer to Vice-Admiral Rickover, who has written widely on this subject. He makes a sharp distinction—as do most of the members of this group—between *education* and *training*. But let the Admiral speak for himself:

As understood in the West, education goes to the whole of a man's personality, seeking to enrich it by widening his intellectual horizon. In contrast, training merely seeks to fit the young into their native society. Let me elaborate:

<sup>27</sup> *Labels and Fingerprints*. A joint statement issued by American Association of School Administrators; National Association of Secondary-School Principals; NEA Department of Elementary School Principals; and NEA Department of Rural Education, Washington, National Education Association, 1960. pp. 8-9.

Education is directed toward enlargement of the individual's comprehension of the world, by giving him the knowledge and the mental capacity to understand what lies beyond his personal experience and observation. It familiarizes him with events and people, distant in time or space, so that he can form independent judgments on social phenomena. It renders intelligible to him the physical world and the laws of nature, so that he can judge man's potentialities and limitations—his place in nature.

Training, on the other hand, develops in youth character traits to suit the predominant ethical and religious beliefs of the community, and teaches socially approved manners, mores and personal appearance. Such formation of attitudes and habits can be called "life adjustment," or adjustment to the "peer group," to borrow favorite expressions of progressive education. Training also develops vocational skills which qualify one to earn a living by doing a specific type of routine work.

Training does not stretch the mind. The intellect is not improved by acquiring habits or learning mechanical skills, nor will routine work enlarge one's mental capacities, as hard thinking will. Anyone who has ever tackled a difficult subject, such as higher mathematics, and used it to solve complicated problems, knows that he has emerged from this experience with a mind that functions better. Thereafter he will find it easier to tackle other subjects and other problems, because his mental capacity has grown. In contrast, learning to typewrite will not improve his ability to reason nor affect the quality of his intellect.<sup>25</sup>

In another of this prolific writer's articles he stresses the distinction between education and training in even more emphatic terms:

For all children, the educational process must be one of collecting factual knowledge to the limit of their *absorptive capacity*. Recreation, manual or clerical training, etiquette, and similar knowhow have little effect on the mind itself and it is with the mind that the school must solely concern itself. The poorer the child's natural endowments, the more does he need to have his mind trained.

We should not support schools if we want no more than "adjustment" of children to life as it is. Children learn this in simpler societies just by "living" and by the incidental training they receive from the grown-ups around them. A child is being properly educated only when he is learning to become independent of his parents. We have schools because we know that in today's world everyone is daily called upon to make decisions for which he needs a background of general knowledge, not obtainable merely by "learning

<sup>25</sup> Hyman C. Rockover, "The World of the Uneducated," *Saturday Evening Post*, CCXXXII, 54, 59 (November 28, 1959).

elementary school, the editor turns his attention to the high school. As a preface to his venture into curriculum building he comments that

"it is a misguided sentimentalism which insists that all students should be urged to stay in high school beyond the legal leaving age. By the time the student has reached sixteen (the leaving age in most states) his talent for absorbing education and his attitude toward work is usually established with a high degree of certainty. If he is one of that small minority who cannot and will not learn, the school should not attempt to increase its 'holding power' by substituting a program in social therapeutics. It is doubtful if he will be better for the attempt and it is certain that the school will be the worse for the dilution of its purpose."<sup>37</sup>

The goal of high-school education is the same as the elementary: "The school's basic task is primarily transmission of factual knowledge in the basic subjects,"<sup>38</sup> and the basic subjects are defined as follows: "English (literature, composition and grammar) throughout the four years; two years of history; a year of plane geometry and one of elementary algebra, another of biology, and one of physical science; some foreign language for all, much for the college bound; an opportunity to elect advanced math; music and art as electives; and physical education properly subordinated to the academic program. This, or a similar program, should be the basic curriculum in any high-school—academic, business, or vocational."<sup>39</sup>

This, thinks the editor, should be the program for the "average and above average" student. What the program should be for the below average student who hasn't been expelled because he "cannot or will not learn, or make a decent effort to learn" is not specified. However, the bulletin does take James Bryant Conant to task for his estimate that only 15 or 20 per cent of high-school students are capable of a genuinely liberal education and points out that "there seems to be no experimental evidence to show that, properly motivated and taught, all students (except only those few whose intellectual equipment is clearly too limited) cannot benefit from exposure to the intellectual disciplines."<sup>40</sup> Perhaps

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4. Note that the proposed program does not differ materially from that of most comprehensive high schools except that most schools do not require all students to study a foreign language and usually give a choice between general mathematics and algebra.

<sup>40</sup> Council for Basic Education, *Bulletin III*, 2 (June, 1959).

this answers our question, as to what would happen to the below average students that the school does *not* dismiss. At any rate the editor makes it clear that it is a "travesty" to offer to the slow learner, "various substitutes for education in which reading is relatively unimportant: vocational courses without intellectual content; home and family living courses; social living; manual training, etc, etc."<sup>41</sup>

The latest pronouncement of the Council as to who can be educated is made by James D. Koerner.<sup>42</sup> He admits that it is not now known how many students can profit from "a solid curriculum." He believes, however, that the basic education program advocated by the subject-matter specialists who prepared the various chapters of the book is applicable to a "very sizable proportion of American youth, including many who do not go to college."

The Council gives high endorsement to the report<sup>43</sup> of the group of academic scholars from the University of California (Berkeley) and Stanford University who were asked by the Board of Education of San Francisco to examine and report on the curriculum of the schools. For this reason it seems appropriate to present a verbatim statement of the goals of education as set forth by this committee:

First, we believe that the purpose of education is to inform the mind and develop the intelligence. Recent pedagogical theory, however, has tended to make "education for life in a democracy" a primary purpose of the public schools, interpreting and applying that phrase in a sense profoundly hostile to excellence in education. The result has been to skimp academic subjects, to lower standards, and to confuse and retard the whole educational process. Nothing could be more contrary to the real interests of democracy. A democratic society cannot survive without an educated electorate and thoughtful, highly trained leaders. *To set citizenship and democracy in the classroom ahead of academic subjects is to put the cart before the horse.* To emphasize democratic principles and procedures before students can understand them

<sup>41</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>42</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. xii. See also an interesting article by Koerner: "The Tragedy of the Conant Report," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLIV, 121-124 (December, 1960). Of the Report, he says: "It has given encyclical status to the idea that our public schools can prepare only a few to live an educated life, and must therefore prepare everybody else with marketable 'skills.' If there ever was a way to create an elite, an intellectual aristocracy of the kind Conant says he hates to the bottom of his soul, this is it." (p. 124)

<sup>43</sup> Council for Basic Education Bulletin IV (May, 1960). This report will, we predict, become one of the most important documents in support of the current drive to improve American education." (p. 1)

and before they know why and how they came into existence is premature and self-defeating.

Secondly, we believe that the schools should make greater provision for differences of ability: every student should receive the greatest challenge and be held to the highest standards which his abilities warrant. Equal opportunity for all should mean the best education for each level of ability, never the leveling down of all standards to bring them within reach of the most indifferent and the least able.<sup>41</sup>

The development of the intellect through the study of the academic subjects as a primary goal of secondary education is certainly not a new emphasis. It could easily be traced back to the early colonial grammar schools where the emphasis was upon classical studies. The required offerings of the modern high school do not differ materially from the proposals advanced by the group of educators who now insist upon the teaching of the basic subjects. The tremendous change has been in the addition of *new* subjects, most of them on an elective basis. The emphasis in the teaching of these basic subjects has always been placed largely upon the mastery of facts and information. And even with the discrediting of faculty psychology and formal discipline, and automatic transfer of training, there continue to be vast numbers of teachers who teach *as if these doctrines were true*. As a matter of fact, much of the emphasis in teacher-education courses in the teaching of the various fields has been placed upon the liberalizing of these disciplines in an attempt to make them function in the life of the individual, by helping students to see the relationships between and among fields of knowledge and the applicability of the fields of knowledge to problems of current living.

Why then the clamor of the critics for basic or fundamental education as the only pathway to the development of the intellect? Some of the most frequent charges made by the group—especially the Council for Basic Education—are these:

1. Subjects have been diluted and standards have been lowered in an endeavor to adjust to the relatively unselected group of students now in

<sup>41</sup> Mark Schorer, *et al.*, *Report of the San Francisco Curriculum Survey Committee*, San Francisco, San Francisco Unified School District Board of Education, April 1, 1960. (Italics added.) Note: The committee consisted of four professors from the University of California (Berkeley): Mark Schorer, English, Tiber Scitovsky, Economics, Abraham Seidenberg, Mathematics, Henry Rapaport, Chemistry; and four professors from Stanford University: William Irvine, English, Gordon E. Latta, Mathematics, David C. Regnery, Biological Sciences, William C. Bark, History.

the high school. This has caused a certain "softness" which is antithetical to the hard rigorous "mind-stretching" of another day. The "false" doctrine of interest and effort has destroyed the concept of rigorous, self-disciplined work. And most of this difficulty is due to the teacher-education programs that have exalted the experimentalist philosophy of John Dewey.

2. The elective system has made it possible for students to select snap courses and thereby avoid the necessity of hard work—and escape the opportunities to discipline and develop the intellect. Hence, the demand for more required work.

3. The high schools have proliferated their elective programs by adding subjects or activities of a so-called practical nature that are just busy work and have nothing to do with education. Driver education, as a case in point, has come in for serious criticism. Of course, everyone is in favor of cutting down the accident rate, but the mere development of a skill is not education because, so it is charged, it does not open avenues for acquiring new knowledge—is not likely to transfer.

4. The present low estate of the academic subjects is the result, in part at least, of an erroneous conception of the individual and a false psychology of learning that has led to the giving of too much freedom to students in planning and carrying out classroom activities.

5. Most of the ills of the high school sketched above, so it is claimed, are due to the fact that educational policy making somehow has been taken out of the hands of the layman and the scholar and placed in the hands of the "educationist"—trained in the teachers' colleges in skills and techniques rather than broadly educated in the liberal arts tradition.

Certainly, few would doubt at least the practical validity of many of the above assertions. Everybody is for developing the intellect, whatever that rather ambiguous term may mean. It is like being in favor of "mother, home, and Heaven." Why then is there resistance to the acceptance of intellectual development as the primary goal of secondary education? Some of the more important considerations are these:

1. The insistence that the systematic study of the academic disciplines is the royal road to the development of the intellect alienates many people who see life and education in a much broader context.

2. There is danger of creating a false and unnecessary dualism between mind and body, knowledge and skills, intellect and emotion,

people who have little intellectual ability and no scholarly interests. It is, therefore, actually detrimental to these students to lead them to believe that they may escape the drudgery of hard manual work by going to high school. The disillusionment that follows when they discover that they cannot find satisfaction in the high school is psychologically bad and should be avoided.

That the present high-school program is poorly adapted to the needs of a vast majority of high-school students is not to be denied. The remedy is not to be found in making the high school *more* selective and centering upon the culture of the past to develop appropriate tools for thinking, but rather in changing the character of the entire program to provide common integrating education for all, and differentiated education in terms of special abilities and future vocational and cultural pursuits.

Whether or not we believe that secondary education should provide for all youth is very largely an academic question. Increasing numbers of young people are demanding admission to the secondary school and their demands are not likely to be denied. What we do with them when they come is the all-important consideration.<sup>45</sup>

2. *The curriculum of the high school should be based upon the common and specialized needs, problems, and interests of the student.* This generalization places the emphasis upon the learner as an active, dynamic organism, responding to his own purposes and goals. The traditional school has tended to regard the individual as passive, and learning as a "pouring-in" process, a matter of establishing appropriate stimulus-response bonds in the nervous system. Much experimentation was carried on to determine the most effective way of establishing these connections. Since all learning was regarded as being specific, the child was called upon to react to a situation in piecemeal fashion, learning each element separately and then putting them together by a process known as association. Concept formation was merely a matter of discovering the common element in a number of specific situations. It is easy to see how this emphasis led to increased attention to more or less mechanical drill as the major element in the learning process. The S-R bond psychology has been repudiated by most psychologists. However, the present emphasis on the part of certain educators upon discipline through drill and formal exercises, mastery of fundamentals, imposition of learning of logical systems of knowledge in science, mathematics, and language, regardless

\* For an analysis of the extent to which the high schools are providing for all groups, see Chapter 3.

of the interests of the learner, is within the same general pattern and subject to the same criticisms.

In recent years, a growing body of literature has tended to bring about an entirely new emphasis in psychological theory. The human being is seen as an organism of remarkable complexity but of equally remarkable unity. It continuously absorbs, transforms, and expends energy in terms of goals which it strives to achieve or, to put it in other language, in terms of psychosomatic tensions which it seeks to relieve. The physical, emotional, and intellectual aspects of behavior are a unity that cannot, except for purposes of discussion, be separated. They are present in every instance of behavior. Learning is a matter of both analysis and synthesis. The individual in interaction with his environment responds to situations as "wholes," to use the terminology of the organismic psychologists. Every phase of personality is vitally dependent upon other phases, and all are acting and reacting at the same time.

The goals of the individual in large measure determine his behavior and these are highly charged with emotional components. The way the individual *feels* about what he does is inseparably bound up with the learning products, as well as with the way he goes about learning. And because the physical cannot be separated from the emotional and intellectual, the context of the learning act is very significant. To divorce intellectual products in the form of generalizations, facts, and information, from the total process of experiencing, is to make of learning a very pale affair indeed. These are all considerations that need to be taken into account in appraising the current trend toward programmed learning through the use of so-called teaching machines.

What we know about the nature of the individual and learning suggests that optimal learning takes place when the individual acts with reference to his interests, his recognized needs, his problems, and his own system of values. This is not to say that the school accepts his goals as satisfactory and valid. It must help him to evaluate his behavior, to create new interests, and to sense neglected aspects of growth, as well as to reconstruct his design for living.

If the learner and learning are to be so regarded, then the curriculum maker is obliged to study the adolescent in his environment in order to ascertain his needs, problems, and interests.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> See Chapters III and IV for the details of such a study, and Chapter VIII for suggestions as to procedures in developing a curriculum based upon needs and problems of living.



The curriculum maker must also give attention to developing a program of general education to meet the *common* needs, problems, and interests of students; that is, to the education needed by *all* for intelligent citizenship. Only in the process of living and working together can we understand and recreate our world, since personality does not develop in a vacuum. The high school should thus be concerned with the improvement of the common life; with the conditions for healthful living; the extension of common interests; the sharing of experience; the problems of everyday living in the home and the immediate and wider community; and the personal problems of growing up. This is not to say that the individual is to be lost in the process, or that individual differences are not to be recognized, but rather that the unique contributions of individuals are to be cherished and given appropriate valuation in promoting common concerns. It is only by these means that individuality flourishes and develops optimally. As individual aptitudes and interests are discovered and developed, they play back into the life of the group and enrich it.

Programs of general education in the past and even in the present have been organized around areas of knowledge, rather than around common needs, problems, and interests.<sup>47</sup>

The special needs, problems, and interests of students provide the basis for specialized education—vocational and otherwise. This aspect of the curriculum is important because it recognizes the uniqueness of the individual—a concept highly prized in our society.<sup>48</sup>

3. *The modes of behavior that are characteristic of democratic living at its best should be utilized as guides to the development of youth.* It has been pointed out repeatedly that the schools of any culture necessarily reflect the ideals, values, mores, and modes of behavior of that culture. The group that believes that the public schools of America are democracy's principal agency for interpreting, refining, and improving our way of life, logically place a primary emphasis of education on preparation for democratic citizenship within a framework of developing optimally the potentialities of each individual. Perhaps this emphasis marks the major difference between this group and those who would consider development of the intellect through the study of the academic

<sup>47</sup> See Chapter VI for a complete analysis of programs of general education.

<sup>48</sup> See Chapter VII for an elaboration of this concept.

disciplines ahead of all other goals. Both groups in a general way subscribe to the idea that the schools should implement the way of life which we call democracy. The issue that divides them is how this should be accomplished. The group which we are now discussing believes that all available resources—organized subjects, community institutions and personnel, text and reference books, and the like—should be utilized as instruments for achieving the highest possible ideal of American citizenship, and that these resources are never to be regarded as ends in themselves. The "subject matter" of education which makes up the curriculum is found in the on-going life of the immediate and wider community—the stresses and strains, the accomplishments, the frustrations, the threats, the fears, the problems, that affect young people as they take on increasing citizenship responsibilities. Whatever is pertinent to this task is a potential resource. Because the goal of optimal development of the individual does not focus sharply upon the training of intellect to the exclusion of all else, it has been termed "anti-intellectual." It would be more appropriate to refer to it as a functional approach to the training of the intellect as one of many facets of human development.

#### FORMULATIONS OF GOALS IN TERMS OF DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

Within the framework of democratic education described above, there have been a number of epoch-making statements which those who would formulate statements of philosophy and goals for a particular situation should take into account. In the context of this volume they also serve as implementations of the goals which we have been discussing.

*The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education* Historically, perhaps the most noteworthy statement was that of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education which set forth the *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education*.<sup>49</sup> This statement was a declaration of the Commission's belief that education should develop in each individual the knowledge, interests, ideals, habits, and powers, whereby he will find his place and use that place to shape both himself and society toward noble ends.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education*, U. S. Office of Education, Bulletin 1918, No. 35, Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1918.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

In terms of this major goal, the Commission stated the "principles" as follows:

1. Health
2. Command of fundamental processes
3. Worthy home membership
4. Vocation
5. Citizenship
6. Worthy use of leisure
7. Ethical character

These principles did call attention to the fact that education ought to be concerned with the major aspects of living as well as with the fundamental processes. It failed, however, to break the lockstep in curriculum-making and teaching procedures. Instead of the reorganization of subjects in such a way as to broaden them through the inclusion of materials bearing on the various aspects of living, the "principles" were parcelled out to what was thought to be the related subjects, e.g., *Worthy Home Membership* became the goal of home economics, *Citizenship* was allocated to the social studies; *Health* to physiology and physical education. Thus the unity that might have been achieved was lost. What remained was the conviction that education was vastly more than mind-training.

The Educational Policies Commission's statement of goals In 1938 the Educational Policies Commission issued the first of a series of monographs which tended to broaden the goals of education and thus to recognize that schools ought to be concerned with living rather than just with learning from textbooks. Its original formulation<sup>51</sup> was predicated on the proposition which was stated earlier in this chapter—that the purposes grow out of a culture's system of values:

"They evolve; they reflect and interact with the purposes which permeate the life of the people. In each of the phases of individual and social living, there are elements which people commend, others which they condemn. Such judgments are based, in the last analysis, on moral standards or ideals. That which, out of their intelligence and experience, the people declare to be good, they will attempt to maintain and perpetuate for the benefit of their children and their children's children. They strive through education to transmit what they think is good for all generations to come."<sup>52</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Educational Policies Commission, *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy*, Washington, D.C., The Educational Policies Commission, N.E.A., 1938.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

In accordance with this pronouncement the Commission presented a brief analysis of what it considered to be the "minimum essentials of democracy." These essentials are (1) the general welfare; (2) civil liberty; (3) the consent of the governed; (4) the appeal to reason; and (5) the pursuit of happiness.<sup>52</sup> The Commission then presented four aspects of educational purpose as follows:

The first calls for a description of the educated *person*, the second, for a description of the *educated member of the family and community group*; the third, of the *educated producer or consumer*; the fourth, of the *educated citizen*. The four major groups of objectives thus defined are:

1. The Objectives of Self-realization
2. The Objectives of Human Relationship
3. The Objectives of Economic Efficiency
4. The Objectives of Civic Responsibility<sup>54</sup>

Each one of these four categories of objectives was then broken down into more specific behaviors of the individual who has attained a particular set of objectives. Forty-three such characteristics of behavior are listed and described. Since the break-down of "the Objectives of Civic Responsibility" has particular pertinence in today's troubled world it seems worthwhile to quote verbatim:

*Social Justice.* The educated citizen is sensitive to the disparities of human circumstance.

*Social Activity.* The educated person acts to correct unsatisfactory conditions.

*Social Understanding.* The educated citizen seeks to understand social structures and social processes.

*Critical Judgment.* The educated citizen has defenses against propaganda.

*Tolerance.* The educated citizen has a regard for the nation's resources.

*Social Application of Science.* The educated citizen measures scientific advance by its contribution to the general welfare.

*World Citizenship.* The educated citizen is a cooperating member of the world community.

*Law Observance.* The educated person respects the law.

*Economic Literacy.* The educated person is economically literate.

*Political Citizenship.* The educated citizen accepts his civic duties.

*Devotion to Democracy.* The educated citizen acts upon an unswerving loyalty to democratic ideals.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8, *Passim*.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108. The reader will do well to read the interpretation of these and other objectives.

The final chapter of this most significant volume deals with "critical factors in the attainment of educational purposes." Written almost a quarter of a century ago, it cites blocks to attainment that are perhaps even more vital today. As a matter of fact, some of them, because of our present preoccupation with the cold war and national survival and the consequent return to a more formal curriculum for the purpose of achieving "quality," have become greater obstacles today than they were in 1938. Among these may be mentioned: Legislative control, high-pressure learning, traditional subject matter, and public opinion unfriendly to education.

The framework and general point of view of the Educational Policies Commission have been rather widely utilized in helping to clarify the goals of American education. One of the more recent studies conducted by French, in collaboration with a larger group of educators, will be sketched briefly.<sup>26</sup> This study grew out of the concern of a group of educators that there was "no comprehensive and authoritative statement of the *behavioral* goals, or outcomes, of general education in secondary schools." A joint project, involving the Educational Testing Service, The Russell Sage Foundation, and the National Association of Secondary School principals, was set up with Will French as "executive editor." Three working committees were appointed: (1) Committee of Consultants charged with developing lists of behavioral outcomes; (2) Committee of Advisors, composed of interested citizens to advise with the other committees concerning public needs; and (3) Committee of Reviewers, composed of teachers, administrators, psychologists and curriculum specialists to serve as individual critics of the behavioral outcomes proffered by the consultants.

Unlike the formulations which have been presented in this section of the chapter, this study was limited to *general* education in the high school, which was defined as that part of the total education which is designed "to meet the *common* needs of youth for competence as a person and as a citizen," as contrasted with *special* education, which deals with "more

<sup>26</sup> Will French, and Associates, *Behavioral Goals of General Education in High School*, New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1957. See also: Nolan C. Kearney, et al., *Elementary School Objectives*, New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1953; Thomas R. McConnell, ed., *A Design for General Education*, Washington, American Council on Education, 1944.

individual needs growing out of cultural or intellectual interest, personal strengths and shortcomings, or one's specific vocational plans."<sup>27</sup>

Building on the four categories of objectives proposed by the Educational Policies Commission and reported above, the committees formulated for each category the "behavioral outcomes" which might be expected of students who were developing in line with the objectives and a long list of illustrative behaviors to give teachers some idea of what might be expected at certain maturity levels. Obviously this process involved long and meticulous analyses. The final result is a systematically organized handbook of reference for the individual teacher or the curriculum-development groups. Perhaps the general nature of the procedure and the findings may be clarified by an illustration of the treatment of the objectives of Civic Responsibility listed earlier in this chapter. Under this category are listed eleven behavioral outcomes,<sup>28</sup> the first one of which is:

*Revealing the Personal Understandings and Characteristics of the Good Citizen.* The growth toward the attainment of this behavioral outcome is revealed by the extent to which the student (1) "understands the meaning of basic democratic values," and (2) "practices basic democratic values." "Illustrative behaviors" which reveal that the student understands the meaning of basic democratic values are these:

1. Is reaching the conclusion that such democratic values as (a) dignity of the human personality; (b) working for the good of others; and (c) utilizing the method of intelligence offers the greatest promise to man for happy and complete living;

2. Understands something of the origin of democratic values and man's struggle for freedom, equality and security and begins to show his appreciation of these values.

3. Understands the basic characteristics of a democratic society and realizes that they are effective only as people use them as a guide to everyday living.

4. Understands his cultural heritage; is aware of its weaknesses but thinks they can be corrected.

5. Recognizes the need for identifying unresolved issues in human life and shows his faith that they can be solved through the democratic process.

6. Accepts democracy as a form of government and as a way of life.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39. These definitions are similar to those offered by the authors in Chapters VI and VII.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

7. Recognizes that freedoms, rights, and privileges demand assumption of responsibilities, duties, and obligations, and begins to assume them.

8. Recognizes why our civil liberties are indivisible; why a denial to one person or group increasingly results in similar denial to others.

9. Demonstrates his belief in the importance of the development and protection of individuality.<sup>59</sup>

It seems impossible at the present time to assess the impact upon the schools of this elaborate study. Because of its complexity it is doubtful that it will be widely used, except, of course, as a compendium of reference—and that is sufficient to justify the amount of time, energy and, creativeness that went into its preparation. One thing that stands out clearly is the broad conception of human development—personal, intellectual, emotional, social—that has to be taken into account in a program of democratic education. This view obviously is in striking contrast with the “cultivation of the intellect” concept discussed earlier in this chapter.

The most recent statement on the goals of American education is contained in the report of President Eisenhower’s Commission on National Goals.<sup>60</sup>

Following excellent discussions on “The Individual” by Henry M. Wriston, and “The Democratic Process,” by Clinton Rossiter, Gardner proceeds to outline “a concrete program for the decade.” In this task he had the assistance of a panel and the advice of some forty educators.

The following are some significant statements which reflect the position on democratic education set forth in earlier chapters:

Education is important in any society, whatever its political or economic forms. But a society such as ours, dedicated to the worth of the individual, committed to the nature of free, rational and responsible men and women, has special reasons for valuing education. Our deepest convictions impel us to foster individual fulfillment. We wish each one to achieve the promise that

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103. It should be noted that the “behavioral outcomes” are such as might be expected from mature high school seniors. “Developmental equivalents” are listed for younger and less mature students.

<sup>60</sup> *Goals for Americans*, The Report of the President’s Commission on National Goals, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. Chapter III, “National Goals in Education” was prepared by John W. Gardner, President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching. Other works by Gardner include: *From High School to Job*, New York, Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1960; *Excellence*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1961.

is in him. We wish each one to be worthy of a free society, and capable of strengthening a free society.

Education is essential not only to individual fulfillment but to the vitality of our national life. The vigor of our free institutions depends upon educated men and women at every level of the society, and at this moment in history, free institutions are on trial. . . .

Our devotion to equality does not ignore the fact that individuals differ greatly in their talents and motivations. It simply asserts that each should be enabled to develop to the full, in his own style and to his own limit. Each is worthy of respect as a human being. This means that there must be diverse programs within the educational systems to take care of the diversity of individuals, and that each of these programs should be accorded respect and stature.<sup>81</sup>

Following this statement of position, Gardner proposes twenty-five specific recommendations bearing upon the teacher, the student, the curriculum, innovations in education, higher education, education outside the formal system, and the sponsorship of education. These are all directed toward the implementation of the principles of democracy set forth in earlier chapters of the report and re-emphasized in the passage quoted above.

*Evaluation.* We have now completed a brief examination of "Optimal Development" as the primary goal of high-school education and have cited a number of implementations of this point of view. While most people would agree that "optimal development of the individual" is a worthy goal not only of education but of national policy in our society, yet it is on the implementation of this goal that the critics have concentrated their fire. The charges which they make are these:

1. The goal is too inclusive. It tends to usurp the functions of the home and other institutions of the community.

2. The emphasis upon "life adjustment" tends to emphasize *training* rather than *education*.

3. The emphasis upon individual freedom tends to undermine the traditional concept of discipline which is held to be essential to national survival and to ordered growth and development.

4. The emphasis upon cooperative planning and working together contributes to the drift toward some form of collectivism and the ultimate destruction of the free enterprise system.

5. The neglect of organized subject matter—the academic disciplines

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.



—leads to anti-intellectualism and hence to a neglect of intellectual development.

On the other hand, the advocates of this broad conception as the primary goal of high-school education hold that:

1. The human organism is a unit and that it therefore does violence to the developmental process to segment learning into arbitrary divisions—e.g., experience vs. training, and the intellectual vs. the practical.

2. Learning takes place most effectively when it is the result of the sensing of a problem which is of deep concern to the individual, rather than when he is confronted with a body of subject-matter to be mastered.

3. The universal character of high-school education makes it imperative for the school to provide for the complete range of potentialities, concerns, and interests of students.

4. The best guarantee of national survival is to develop citizens who have learned the techniques of solving real problems of living by practicing them in the schools.

5. The transmission of the heritage is best accomplished by focusing upon present-day problems.

## SUMMARY

This chapter has set forth many views with respect to the philosophy and goals of education—principally secondary. The purpose was to provide a foundation for readers and possibly for curriculum-development groups, upon which they might build their own conception of philosophy and purposes. Obviously this quest for giving meaning to the education process is an endless one. Whatever decisions are made need to be subjected to continuous critical reappraisal in light of rapidly changing conditions in the culture. More specifically, the following points have been developed:

1. The traditional systematic philosophies have lost much of their meaning and usefulness for formulating the major goals of high-school education.

2. The basic values of democracy as a way of life constitute a workable philosophy upon which the high school can and should build its goals.

3. Much of the present emphasis upon the need for a clarification of goals is due to concern over national survival.

4. The major issue concerning goals of education involves the problem of whether the school should be concerned primarily with intellectual development, interpreted largely as mastery of the academic disciplines, or with the problems of present-day living in a democratic society as they impinge on the life of the adolescent.

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# 3

## *Educational Values and Learning Theories*



SINCE THOSE WHO ARE responsible for curriculum development and improvement are concerned with the values which they seek to achieve through the school program, it follows that they must also be concerned with the processes through which these values are achieved. In other words, they must be concerned with learning. Likewise the concepts of teaching and learning which the teacher holds are inseparably bound up with the values or goals which are considered to be of prime importance. For example, if the teacher believes that the acquisition of facts and information are the most important outcomes in learning, then it follows that his concept of teaching will be that of repetitive drill, and he is likely to subscribe to a theory of learning that is congenial to his practices. If the teacher believes that the development of independent critical thinking is a major value in our democratic society, naturally he will organize the work of the classroom in terms of problems to be solved, issues to be considered, plans to be made and executed. Consequently he is likely to subscribe to a theory of learning that emphasizes cognition. If the teacher believes that obedience to orders is of great significance in citizenship education, he will stress getting students to follow directions *without question. Automatic responses will therefore be prized. Logically* such a teacher should support a stimulus-response theory of learning. But if the teacher holds firmly to the idea that cooperative planning is a value inherent in democratic living, obviously he will organize the life of the classroom in terms of cooperatively developed problems and projects. This implies a more dynamic organismic approach.

Probably most teachers are not conscious of the learning theory which underlies their practices. They operate in terms of the exigencies of the situation. This is not to say, however, that teachers should not be students of the learning process and its implications for democratic citizenship. As a matter of simple fact, theories of learning are daily becoming more important. The complexity of society and the social forces that affect our daily lives make it imperative that teachers develop skills in helping students to develop the understandings, values, and skills needed to cope with this constantly changing environment. An additional reason why teachers should become students of the learning process is the increasing introduction of technology into the classroom. Witness the rapid growth of the use of programmed learning, of teaching machines, and television in the schools. Teachers must be able to evaluate these new learning devices and procedures in terms of the educational goals which they consider most significant.

## THE PSYCHOLOGIST AND VALUES

The educator can learn from psychology the most efficient ways of achieving any of the ends suggested above, but he is not likely to learn from psychology the ends toward which he ought to direct his energies, for most psychologists maintain a strict neutrality on the question of what is of most worth in human behavior. This is well illustrated in the following quotation:

Our standards of good and bad interfere with the cold detachment that science requires. We look at a motion picture of an ape or of a child and are prevented from seeing it in psychological terms by our tendencies to see the creature as repulsive or cute. We see someone behaving in an immoral way and our distaste prevents us from trying to understand the basis of the act. We feel only horror and disgust that anyone could be so depraved. Observe, over a short period of time, how frequently you find yourself evaluating someone's behavior, judging it as "good" or "bad." Such evaluations are not a part of psychology. They provide insight only into your standards of conduct. They do not help you in understanding the behavior of the individual judged.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Edwin R. Guthrie and Allen L. Edwards, *Psychology: A First Course in Human Behavior*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1949, pp. 8-9.

Carried to its logical conclusion, the position stated above implies that the laws or theories governing human behavior are independent of political, social, or economic ideologies, and of human aspirations to the good life. In this sense what the psychologist tells us about the nature of learning can be used to further any kind of individual or social values. In effect, the psychologist says, "You decide what values you want to achieve, and I will tell you how to bring about the changes in behavior that are implied by the values selected."

The values, then, which are held by the educator, must be determined *before* the psychologist may help him to any great extent in determining appropriate means of attaining them. The preceding chapter sought to suggest some characteristics of the democratic process which should give direction to the program. The present task is to discover what help can be received from the psychology of learning in bringing about the changes in behavior considered to be important in our democratic society.

Some of the problems upon which the educator needs help from psychology are these: Do the capacities of the individual for learning certain modes of behavior justify our faith in democracy as a way of life, or even as a form of government? What kinds of motivation are most effective in learning, and are at the same time consistent with a democratic system of values? How much reliance can we place upon transfer of training and what set of environmental conditions are most conducive to effective transfer? Is our faith in reflective thinking as the best guarantee of effective citizenship justified, or must we provide a more rigid procedure for inculcating knowledge and attitudes?

Obviously psychology cannot provide the answers to such problems, but it can provide the data which may be helpful to the educator in coping with these problems. Perhaps we had best begin our quest for answers by agreeing on a definition of learning.

## **WHAT IS LEARNING?**

There are many definitions of learning, none of them entirely satisfactory. Perhaps Hilgard has helped as much as any psychologist to clarify this difficult concept. This is his cautious definition: "Learning is the process by which an activity originates or is changed through reacting to an encountered situation, provided that the characteristics of the change in activity cannot be explained on the basis of native response

tendencies, maturation, or temporary states of the organism (e.g., fatigue, drugs, etc.)."<sup>2</sup>

Actually, as Hilgard points out, the learning process is always an inference from *performance*. The organism can now do what it could not do previously. But the mere observation of performance is inadequate to support the inference that such performance is the result of *learning*. For example, it may be charged to maturation, as when a child "learns" to walk, or when a bird "learns" to fly. Such acts cannot be attributed to *training procedures*. Another interpretation which must be placed upon the definition is the change in performance which results from *work-fatigue* or the use of narcotics. These changes in performance, according to Hilgard, cannot properly be attributed to learning.

\* The task of the educator then is twofold. He must determine what kinds of performance are desirable from the standpoint of the culture and the individual's own value system, and he must determine and provide the conditions under which the desired performances are most likely to take place. The first task involves philosophy and has been dealt with *in the previous chapter*, and the second involves an understanding of the nature of the individual and the learning process. In order to act intelligently, it is desirable to gain some understanding of the theories underlying the various conceptions of learning. These will now be explored briefly.<sup>3</sup>

**The mind-substance theory** Deeply embedded in our culture is the so-called mind-substance theory. Even though it is outmoded as an effective theory of learning, it is worth discussing briefly, because consciously or unconsciously it is basic to a considerable amount of what passes for education in the high school. Perhaps Bode has done more than any other educator to bring this time-honored theory out into the open and examine it critically. He explains the position in his own inimitable fashion:

There are facts in this world of ours that are not reducible to terms of motion and arrangement, however much they may be connected with material processes. Such facts are our aches and pains, our aspirations and frustrations, our appreciations, and purposes and volitions. These are not

<sup>2</sup> Ernest R. Hilgard, *Theories of Learning*, Second Edition, Copyright ©, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1936, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> For an extensive treatment, see Hilgard, *Ibid.*



just by-products of matter; by definition they cannot be produced by matter at all. They have their source or ground in different kinds of reality. This reality exists in its own right, so to speak, which means that it cannot be reduced to a form of matter and that it can operate in relative independence of the laws of mechanics. . . . We are profoundly convinced that man is made of different stuff from the inanimate things by which he is surrounded. In the language of Holy Writ, he was created a "living soul." Inanimate objects are the slaves of circumstance, but man can choose his goal and bend circumstances to his will. He can foresee the future and shape his present conduct with reference to what is yet to come. To him accordingly, it is given to have dominion over the earth and to be master of his own destiny. As Voltaire once remarked, this little being, five feet tall, can undertake to constitute himself an exception to the laws of the universe.<sup>4</sup>

It is easy to see why this doctrine has such a widespread and popular appeal. It places man on a plane above the "sticks and stones." It is congenial to the traditional concept of culture. It provides an easy theological explanation of the survival of the human soul. It provides an escape from the baffling problems and frustrations of the mundane world.

How does learning take place under this conception of the nature of mind? The doctrine of formal discipline provided a complete answer. Such qualities as remembering, perceiving, observing, and reasoning had their counterparts in faculties located in different parts of the brain and were cultivated by exercise. The particular skill, understanding, or information to be learned was not in itself of major importance. The abiding value was the power which the particular faculty gained by effective exercise. Thus the subject matter of education was important not because it helped the individual to meet a need or solve a problem, but because it provided mental discipline. In other words, the study of "tough" academic subjects developed in the individual a "reservoir of power" which could be used in solving any kind of problem that the individual faced in later life.

This doctrine provided an easy answer to the charge that much of what is learned is soon forgotten, for as Bode suggests, according to this doctrine, education is what is left after what we have learned has been

<sup>4</sup> Boyd H. Bode, *How We Learn*, Copyright, 1940, by permission of D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, pp. 20-21, *passim*. For a searching analysis of the various conceptions of learning in their historical and cultural settings, see, V. T. Thayer, *The Role of the School in American Society*, New York, Dodd, Mead and Company, 1960, Part III.

forgotten. The power of reasoning, developed through the study of Latin or mathematics, can readily be transferred to a situation involving reason in every day life.

Anderson sums up succinctly the tenets of the position as follows:

1. All individuals have the potentialities to become educated.
2. Motivation must be raised from the level of material needs to those of spiritual needs. Needs which the psychologist might label as basic must often be uprooted, and value systems that are often non-material must be established.
3. Practice or drill has significance, not so much because it establishes right responses, but because it disciplines the individual to habits of work.
4. Education and transfer are in a sense synonymous. The educated person has not necessarily learned the specific responses essential for making adjustments to the exigencies of life because he intuitively senses what will be the appropriate conduct. General ability to think marks the educated man.<sup>2</sup>

This conception of the learning process dominated the thinking of the famous "Committee of Ten"<sup>3</sup> which held that any subject taught for an equal amount of time by equally competent instructors was as good as any other subject. The committee, however, was careful to point out that the subjects that were most important were: English, classical languages, mathematics, science, and history—especially for students who were college-bound. The needs of other students were largely neglected. The committee could not have reached these conclusions without a firm belief in faculty psychology and its counterpart—formal discipline. As Thayer points out: "Were this doctrine valid, the task of education would be relatively simple. All the preparation a schoolman would need to insure the effectiveness of schooling would be to identify the mental powers most important for training and the subject matter best adapted toward this end, knowing the future would take care of itself."<sup>4</sup>

The doctrine of faculty psychology and its counterpart, formal discipline, could not withstand the assaults of the scientific studies of learning

<sup>2</sup> G. Lester Anderson, "Theories of Behavior and Some Curriculum Issues," *The Journal of Educational Psychology*, XXXIX, 134-135 (March, 1948).

<sup>3</sup> *Report of the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies*, New York, The American Book Company, 1893.

<sup>4</sup> Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

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<sup>5</sup> G. Lester Anderson, "Theories of Behavior and Some Curriculum Issues," *The Journal of Educational Psychology*, XXXIX, 134-135 (March, 1948).

<sup>6</sup> *Report of the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies*, New York, The American Book Company, 1893.

<sup>7</sup> Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

instituted by Thorndike<sup>8</sup> and carried on by other experimental psychologists. It may safely be said that these doctrines are dead so far as psychological thinking is concerned, but this is far from saying that the practices which flourished under the reign of formal discipline are no longer current. As a matter of fact, the perennial demand for a return to the classics, or to hard, tough subjects can be justified only on the basis of this outmoded psychological doctrine. Likewise, much of what passes as "liberal education" and the values which are expected to be derived from it has its roots in the mind-substance theory, although the proponents of such programs would deny the charge vigorously.

If we reject the once respectable and still popular "mental discipline" theory of learning, what is to take its place? Is there a single unitary theory which is so well documented by scientific experiment that it is possible to accept it as an authentic guide to the determination of the curriculum and instructional procedures? Perhaps the most satisfactory, though not reassuring, answer is to be found in the writings of Hilgard.<sup>9</sup>

He divides learning theories into two major and several minor families. The major families are *stimulus-response* theories, which include the theories of Thorndike, Guthrie, Skinner and Hull, and the *cognitive* theories represented by Tolman and the *gestalt* and *field-theory* psychologists, including Lewin. Other theories identified by Hilgard are *functionalism*, represented by John Dewey, whom he acknowledges to be the founder of official functionalism, Carr, and Woodworth; *psychodynamics*, and the *probabilistic theories of the mathematical model builders*.<sup>10</sup>

While the detailed analysis of theories of learning proposed is undoubtedly of great value to the student of psychology—and, for that matter, is certainly a significant contribution to the field of psychology—the consideration of the two major theories and of their implications for education in our democracy seems to serve our purpose adequately. At the risk of oversimplification, *functionalism* and the *gestalt* and *organismic* theories will be considered to be within the cognitive classification.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Edward L. Thorndike, *Educational Psychology*, Briefer Course, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1914. He dismisses the opinion that "attention, memory, reasoning, choice, and the like, are mystical powers given to man as his birthright which weight the dice in favor of thinking or doing one thing rather than another. However the laws of instinct, exercise and effect make the throw. This opinion is vanishing from the world of expert thought and no more need be said about it than that it is false and would be useless to human welfare, if true." (p. 73)

<sup>9</sup> Hilgard, *op. cit.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

The issues which divide the two major schools of thought, according to Hilgard, are these:

1. *"Peripheral" versus "Central" Intermediaries.* "The stimulus response theorist tends to believe that some sort of chained muscular responses, linked perhaps by fractional anticipatory goal responses, serve to keep a rat running to a distant foodbox. The cognitive theorist, on the other hand, more freely infers central brain processes such as memories or expectations, as integrators of goal-seeking behavior."<sup>11</sup>

2. *Acquisition of Habits versus Acquisition of Cognitive Structures.* This issue is self-explanatory. The stimulus-response theorist holds that learning is habit formation, while the cognitive theorist claims that not all learning can be classified as habit formation—that learning, which involves choices, presupposes the use of facts already learned—in other words, cognition.

3. *Trial and Error versus Insight in Problem-Solving.* This issue, very important to the educator, is explained by Hilgard as follows:

When confronted with a novel problem, how does the learner reach a solution? The stimulus-response psychologist finds the learner assembling his habits from the past appropriate to the new problem, responding either according to the elements that the new problem has in common with familiar ones, or according to aspects of the new situation which are similar to situations met before. If these do not lend to solution, the learner resorts to trial and error, bringing out of his behavior repertory one response after another until the problem is solved.<sup>12</sup>

On the other hand, the cognitive psychologist holds that when the learner is confronted with a novel situation, he *may* meet it through trial and error behavior, but not necessarily so. He may meet it through "insight," that is, through an understanding of the relationships involved in the problem. Hilgard warns, however, that "no single experiment will demolish either the interpretation according to trial and error or the interpretation according to insight."<sup>13</sup>

While there are many other issues that divide learning theorists, the three outlined above are of the greatest importance to the educator. And of these three, the issue involving trial and error versus insightful learning is particularly crucial to the development of an educational program. As a matter of fact, the other two issues proposed by Hilgard may well be regarded as aspects of the single issue—trial and error vs. cognition.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

**Stimulus-response theories of learning** There is a fairly large psychological school of thought, usually referred to as behaviorism or connectionism, which takes as its point of departure the scientific doctrine that *the whole is the sum of its parts*. Edward Lee Thorndike, who has been called the father of modern psychology, sought over a period of almost half a century to document what became known as the S-R bond theory of learning. The S in the bond refers to any situation or state of affairs outside or inside the organism. The R refers to a state of affairs which is related to some S in sequence or in a more dynamic manner. The symbol S-R indicates the relationship. The connections or bonds which are formed explain all types of animal or human learning. Thus, education consists of presenting appropriate situations (stimuli) to the organism. The observable response (or behavior) is what results. Learning consists in "stamping in" the appropriate bonds and "stamping out" the undesirable ones. From this simple explanation Thorndike deduced his famous "Laws of Learning" which dominated educational practices for many years. Even reasoning, or the operation of the "higher mental processes," is accounted for in the same manner. It merely involves more bonds. The situation is just more subtle, not different, therefore the response is more difficult to interpret.

Returning again to the part-whole dictum, it is easy to see how the Thorndikean psychology fits in. Learning is purely mechanical. The organism operates like a machine, in wholly predictable ways.<sup>14</sup>

It can readily be seen that this theory of learning discounts the traditional explanation of transfer of training through the exercise of faculties of the mind. As a matter of fact it reduces transfer to a purely mechanical process limited to those situations which have within them "identical elements" which function in the same manner as interchangeable parts on two different makes of machine gun.

This type of explanation of transfer, which of course is consistent with the general position, gives enormous impetus to mechanical class-

<sup>14</sup> See Ernest R. Hilgard, *Theories of Learning*. First Edition, Copyright, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1948. He likens the connectionistic theory of learning to "machines with rigid parts—with levers, pulleys, gears, motors—machines like typewriters or cash registers. When a key is pushed the consequence is definitely predictable. The models may vary enormously in complexity, including automatic telephone switchboards and computing bombights, but the principle is the same." (p. 14).

room procedures<sup>15</sup> in which the emphasis is upon drill, memorization, breaking down the whole learning situation into minute parts and "programming" these sequentially, either in the form of a textbook or for use in some mechanical device. It is conceivable—almost predictable—that this trend will grow rapidly in the next decade.<sup>16</sup>

\* It is difficult, if not impossible, to relate specific practices to any theory of learning, but the following practices are certainly closely associated with or congenial to this theory:

1. The daily recitation system with its emphasis upon the acquisition of facts and information
2. Excessive reliance upon standardized tests as a basis of evaluation
3. So-called objective marking systems in terms of normal curves
4. The fixed curriculum determined by job or activity analysis, imposed upon the learner without giving due attention to his needs and interests
5. Excessive reliance upon repetitive drill as a basis for learning at the expense of the use of reflective thinking
6. Teacher domination of the classroom at the expense of cooperative teacher-student planning
7. Excessive emphasis upon external rewards and punishment as a basis for motivation

On the credit side may be placed the following:

1. Encouragement of the use of observed behavior as a basis for determining the extent to which learning has taken place
2. Introduction of the concept of functionality into learning
3. Emphasis upon individual differences, particularly with respect to differences in rates of learning

<sup>15</sup> It is no accident that the leader in the development of "teaching machines" and "programmed learning," B. F. Skinner, is also one of the leading advocates of a modified stimulus response theory of learning. See his article: "Teaching Machines," *Science*, CXXXIII 969-977 (October 24, 1958). For an interpretation and appraisal of Skinner's theory of learning, see Ernest R. Hilgard, *Theories of Learning*, Second Edition, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956, pp. 82-120.

<sup>16</sup> See an enthusiastic prediction by James D. Finn, "Technology and the Instructional Process," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLI, 371-378 (June 1960), and for a more balanced view see: Edward Fry, "Teaching Machines: The Coming Automation," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLI, 29-31 (October, 1959). For an excellent collection of articles on this subject, see A. A. Lumsdaine and Robert Glaser, eds., *Teaching Machines and Programmed Learning*, A Source Book, Washington, National Education Association, 1960.



4. Destruction of the "formal discipline" theory of learning
5. Encouragement of social analysis as one basis for curriculum development

How fares the cultivation of democratic values under the stimulus-response theory of learning?

1. In terms of the democratic aspiration to develop citizens who not only have the attitude of free inquiry, but also the determination to apply its techniques in criticizing and refining our institutions, and reconstructing our national goals, it has little to offer, since the thinking process is reduced to mechanical trial and error responses.

2. The theory has little to offer by way of transfer of training since learning tends to be specific and atomistic in character. This seems especially true in programmed learning.<sup>17</sup> Since this is true, there is little likelihood that the learning products would lead to any appreciable reconstruction of experience which depends upon the ability of the individual to deal creatively with novel experiences.

3. The theory gives little place to the cherished democratic value of respect for the integrity and worth of the individual. The assumption that the individual, his nature and needs, is central in society, is not likely to be implemented by a theory of learning that gives so little attention to the dynamic quality of the individual.

4. With limited goals, in areas in which facts, information, and skills play a significant role, the application of the theory is undoubtedly defensible, but it would be a serious mistake to assume that techniques that work well in limited areas would work equally well in *all* areas—particularly areas which call for critical thinking, creativeness, or the making of value judgments.

**Cognitive theories of learning** Since one of the central concerns of education is the development of the ability of the individual to utilize freely the method of intelligence, interpreted as broad scientific method, in the conduct of living, it is to be expected that the educator would be interested in theories of the learning process that emphasize *insight* in problem solving rather than trial and error behavior. Theories that are most congenial to the cultivation of creative intelligence are caught up

<sup>17</sup> See Herbert J. Klausmeier and Philip Lambert, "Teaching Machines and the Learning Process," *Educational Leadership*, XXIII, 278-283; 324 (February, 1961).

in such designations as classical gestalt, and field, or organismic psychology.

In contrast to the mechanistic interpretations of the stimulus-response psychologists, this school of psychology takes its cue from the conception of *the whole as something quite different from the sum of its parts*. Max Wertheimer is credited as having first announced the theory in Germany in 1912. It gained little attention, however, until the appearance in English translations of Kurt Koffka's *Growth of the Mind* in 1924 and Wolfgang Köhler's *Mentality of Apes* in 1925. The new theory was known as *gestalt* and was the forerunner of organismic psychology as expounded by such psychologists as Kurt Lewin, R. H. Wheeler, Edward C. Tolman, Karl S. Lashley, and Norman R. F. Maier. Many educators of the experimentalist school of thought, including Kilpatrick, Bode, Thayer, Raup, and Childs, saw in this movement a way of extending the theory of learning promulgated by John Dewey and others.

This group, in contrast to the Behaviorists, holds that the organism does not function like a mechanical device—a machine. Rather it functions as a “whole”—no part of which can be changed without changing the “whole.” As Hilgard points out:

A different model is provided by whirlpools, candle flames, and soap bubbles, in which the parts are related to the whole in a less rigid manner. You can scoop a bucketful of water out of a whirlpool without changing it. The whirlpool, the candle flame and soap bubble are illustrations of dynamic equilibria just as physical as the machine mentioned earlier, yet suggesting quite different analogies . . . [the field psychologist] is definitely on the side of the models of dynamic equilibria. Living things, unlike machines, are constantly interchanging their substance with the environment; they remain “the same” only because of a patterning or organization which persists in the midst of change. . . . By adopting the model of dynamic equilibria, the field psychologist warns against any effort to comprehend the totality of behavior in terms of component parts. The whole must always be viewed as a system, to which the parts are subordinate.<sup>18</sup>

This emphasis upon the whole being more than the sum of its parts has very important implications for evolving a satisfactory theory of learning. First of all, the total situation in which learning takes place

<sup>18</sup> Ernest R. Hilgard, *Theories of Learning*. First Edition, Copyright, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1948, pp. 14–15. This striking analysis seems to have been omitted from the second edition of Hilgard's book. Nevertheless it seems appropriate to use it here.

becomes important, for learning becomes a process of continuous interaction between the organism and the environment. The relationships which exist between the organism and the environment are therefore in a constant state of change. This requires considerable modification of the explanation of learning as the "stamping in" of appropriate S-R bonds, for the stimulus is in a constant state of change since it must be interpreted in terms of relationships. Thus, repetitive drill becomes less important than drill associated with meanings which provide the materials for reconstructing the total situation. Theoretically there is no such thing as repetition. Second, the emphasis shifts from mechanical to insightful behavior. Even the simple animal experiments of the Gestalists stress the significance of insight, which is defined as that point in the learning process at which the learner perceives "the how and why of a situation." Köhler's apes, for example, solved the problem of reaching food by putting two sticks together. When the sticks were perceived in their relationship to the goal of food-getting, the animal is said to have insight. At this point the total situation becomes a reorganized whole. In a very rudimentary way, this kind of learning is an illustration of thinking—a process which is so highly prized in our democratic culture. As a consequence of this emphasis the whole problem of transfer takes on new significance. Instead of the simple mechanical explanation of transfer as the recognition of identical elements, the reconstruction of the situation in terms of old and new meanings (insights) is, in a sense, transfer. The implication of this explanation is clear. The learner is capable of transfer just to the extent that he brings to a given situation a rich store of meanings. Third, and perhaps most important, the theory places more emphasis upon the learner as a dynamic whole, who is capable of acting in terms of goals which serve as a means of giving direction to the process of a continuous reorganization of the field, which, of course, includes the previous experiences of the learner. Forty years of gestalt experimentation seems to confirm Dewey's lifelong emphasis upon learning as an active process, and upon education as the "continuous reconstruction of experience."

Unfortunately, the field theory of learning has yet to explain fully all of the problems of learning. In spite of much discussion the precise nature of insight is not fully understood. There remains something of an air of mystery about it which could easily imply some mystical element of human behavior—an implication which the field theorists emphatically

deny. Furthermore, the field theorists fail to take cognizance of the fact, which is stressed by the stimulus-response psychologists, that there are relatively *mechanical components* of behavior that seem to be the result of trial and error or conditioning. As Cole and Bruce state:

In some respect the Gestaltists have shown us what learning *ought* to be like. Instead of the slow plodding, repetitious learning of the conditioning experiment, we *ought* to find a way of handling our learners and materials that would lead to *flashes of insight*. Instead of arranging tasks which favor a blind adjustment to particular cues, we should seek wherever possible to create situations which permit the learner to discover *essential relationships*. Then we should not need to fear lest our training fail to transfer to new settings where the cues are slightly altered. Instead of poorly understood facts, difficult to grasp and organize, and then *swiftly forgotten*, we should present such clearly organized patterns, such meaningful wholes, that, once grasped, they become a permanent part of the learner's equipment. Instead of insisting, however, that all learning actually conform to this idea, we shall make progress by asking the pointed question: "Precisely what are the conditions which stand in the way of this insightful ideal?"<sup>19</sup>

This quotation points up the thesis that the psychologist, much as he *may desire to do so, does not operate apart from a system of values* unless he is entirely oblivious of the "field" which surrounds him. He orders his experiments, formulates and tests his hypothesis, in the light of what to him seem to be desirable *outcomes*. Consequently, as we examine theories of learning we are likely to ask: "Are the values which we cherish attainable in the light of what is known about the learner and the learning process? What are the most effective learning experiences for achieving our goals?"

**Experimentalism as a cognitive theory of learning** It was stated in the previous section that the gestalt and field theories of learning seemed most congenial to the goals of democratic education. Experimentalism, usually thought of as one of the major philosophies,<sup>20</sup> has also propounded a theory of learning which borrows heavily from the gestalt and field theories. Since the theory has been developed and applied by educators rather than experimental psychologists, it somehow gets lost in dis-

<sup>19</sup> Lawrence E. Cole and William F. Bruce, *Educational Psychology*, Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y., World Book Company, 1950, p. 483.

<sup>20</sup> See Chapter II for an interpretation of experimentalism (or pragmatism) as a philosophical concept.

cussions of theories of learning. However, Hilgard, the psychologist, regards John Dewey, the educator, as "the founder of official functionalism,"<sup>21</sup> a loose term that hardly defines a psychological school of thought.

Beginning in 1896, with his now famous paper dealing with the reflex-arc concept in learning, Dewey, over a period of a half-century, continued to advance a dynamic theory of learning which was quite opposed to the prevailing stimulus-response theories. During this period he also waged continuous warfare against formal discipline and practices which seemed to be based upon an outmoded theory of mind.

The central thesis of this school of thought,<sup>22</sup> insofar as it is concerned with learning and the learning process, is that the human organism is a dynamic goal-seeking entity capable of responding creatively to his environment—transforming himself and his environment in the process. Dewey explains this type of learning, as opposed to stimulus-response theory, as follows:

. . . Stimulus-response theory as usually held, cuts off the environment from behavior. It treats environment simply as an external occasion from which behavior proceeds. Behavior then becomes exclusively an affair going on inside the organism, an affair which is simply set off or initiated by the environment. In reality the environment is just as much comprised within behavior as are organic processes. Behavior is not just something which goes on in a surrounding medium. If it were, behavior could be studied and described as something which goes on in the organism, or which goes forth out of it in total neglect of the environment save the reference to some part of the latter as a touch-and-go stimulus. Behavior is in fact a continuous interaction in which environing as well as organic factors are included. This

<sup>21</sup> Ernest R. Hilgard, *Theories of Learning*, Second Edition, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956, pp. 329-330.

<sup>22</sup> In addition to the prolific writings of Dewey which are well edited by Joseph Ratner, *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1928, and a number of succeeding anthologies, see the writings of other members of this school of thought, e.g., Boyd H. Bode, *How We Learn*, Boston, D. C. Heath & Company, 1940; V. T. Thayer, *The Role of the School in American Society*, New York, Dodd, Mead and Company, 1960; H. Gordon Hullfish, *Aspects of Thorndike's Psychology in their Relation to Educational Theory and Practice*, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University Press, 1926; William Heard Kilpatrick, *Remaking the Curriculum*, New York, Newsom and Company, 1936; John L. Childs, *Education and the Philosophy of Experimentalism*, New York, The Century Company, and also by the same author: *The Experimentalist Educational Theory*, Bode Memorial Lecture, Columbus, Ohio, The College of Education, The Ohio State University, 1957. See also "John Dewey Centennial," *Saturday Review* XLII, 17-26, 52-53, 56 (November 21, 1959) for a critical appraisal of the work and influence of John Dewey.

is true even of the functions we often regard as exclusively psychological. We do not just breathe—we breathe air; we do not just digest—we digest food stuffs; we do not just move the legs and body—we walk on the ground and from one place to another so as to obtain a more favorable environment to be incorporated in subsequent behavior. To describe the structures and processes of the organism in isolation, in their exclusive reference to organic structures, and call the result an account of behavior, is to omit the most distinctive character of behavior.<sup>23</sup>

This quotation is in essence a restatement of Dewey's original theory that instead of regarding the "reflex arc", stimulus-response bond as defining the learning process, we need to consider the activity (a transaction between the organism and the environment) as a complete cycle or "reflex circuit" in which the response may in effect become the stimulus. This is to say that learning is a process of transforming the organism and the environment.

Bode, in his own inimitable way, illustrates the "reflex-circuit" theory of continuous and concomitant reorganization of the situation or activity in the following quotation:

Let us take the case of a pedestrian who is picking his way carefully across a muddy or slippery path. His general aim or purpose is, of course, to get on to his destination. His coordinations, however, must be continually readjusted as he goes along. Every time he moves forward he first looks to see where to place his foot. Perhaps he pauses a moment each time. Stated in terms of stimulus and response, his progress is interrupted at each step because the stimulus is incomplete. There must be a reorganization of his responses each time before he can go on. The important thing to note in this connection is that this reorganization is just as much a reorganization of the environment as it is a reorganization of the response, in accordance with the field concept. The reorganization of the environment takes place in accordance with the requirements of the situation; which is to say that our pedestrian must manage to see the spot where the foot is to be placed and he must see it in terms of the length of the next step, in terms of direction and in terms of the height to which the foot must be raised—in precisely the same way that a baseball player "judges" a fly ball. The whole process is both a process of shaping up the outward conditions and a process of coordinating the responses.

The moral of all this is that the reorganization of both the responses and

<sup>23</sup> Quoted by Joseph Ratner, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-101. (From *Mind and Body*, an address before the American Academy of Medicine: "The Public and Its Problems," pp. 10-11.)

the environment goes on as a unitary process. In any situation where the responses are not adequately organized for adaptive purposes, there is a corresponding lack of organization on the side of the environment. We cannot react appropriately to a situation because the situation is not clearly defined. . . . On the side of the body there is a corresponding activity which is pressing forward toward a greater completeness, and this activity of the moment is the response.<sup>24</sup>

This concept of the learning situation paves the way for the experimentalist's emphasis upon reflective thinking as the method of intelligent learning—learning so highly prized in training for effective citizenship in our society.<sup>25</sup> Reflective thinking, as defined by the experimentalists, takes its cue from the method of scientific inquiry, except that the complete control of all variables is not always possible or necessary. Dewey's classic summary of the general features of a reflective experience follows:

They are (1) perplexity, confusion, doubt, due to the fact that one is implicated in an incomplete situation whose full character is not yet determined; (2) a conjectural anticipation—a let alone interpretation of the given elements, attributing to them a tendency to effect certain consequences; (3) a careful survey (examination, inspection, exploration, analysis) of all attainable considerations which will define and clarify the problem at hand; (4) a consequent elaboration of the tentative hypothesis to make it more precise and more consistent, because squaring with a wider range of facts; (5) taking one stand upon the projected hypothesis as a plan of action which is applied to the existing state of affairs: doing something overtly to bring about the anticipated result, thereby testing the hypothesis. It is the extent and accuracy of steps three and four which mark off a distinctive reflective experience from one on the trial and error plane. They make thinking itself into an experience.<sup>26</sup>

\* Boyd H. Bode, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-230. (By permission of D. C. Heath and Company.)

\* See John Dewey, *How We Think*, Revised Edition, Boston, D. C. Heath and Company, 1933. First published a half century ago, this volume is still one of the best references dealing with the nature of reflective thinking. See also by the same author, *Democracy and Education*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1916, for a more detailed account of the thinking process.

\* John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, pp. 163-164. Copyright 1916 by The Macmillan Company, New York, used with their permission. For similar analyses see: Robert L. Thorndike, "How Children Learn the Principles and Techniques of Problem-Solving," in *Learning and Instruction*, Forty-ninth Yearbook, Part I. National Society for the Study of Education, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1950, Chapter VIII; Lawrence Cole and William F. Bruce, *Educational Psychology*, New York, The World Book Company, 1950, Chapter XIV; William H. Burton, Roland B. Kimball, and Richard Wing, *Education for Effective Thinking*, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960.

Reflective thinking, then, begins with a "forked road" situation. The individual is confronted with the necessity for acting, without being able to move toward the goal—which may be finding his way out of a practical difficulty—the car stalls, the road is blocked, the tomato vines are beginning to wilt; or the forked-road situation may involve an intellectual understanding—"Why does water vapor form on the inside of the windowpanes?" "How does television work?" "What are the Communists going to try next?" In either case the essence is, as Dewey states, a "perplexity, confusion, or doubt" which has to be cleared before equilibrium can be restored. It is apparent that this type of situation is common in the lives of everyone—and the more complex the environment, the more problems are likely to arise.

What is to be done? At this point the central element in reflective thinking arises. Instead of responding blindly in trial and error fashion, there is suspension of judgment as to the appropriate outcome and the setting up of one or more hypotheses, in the language of the scientist, which are designed to direct further inquiry. In the less sophisticated language of the layman, we might think of this tentative solution as a "hunch" or even as a guess. It is well established that this step is common—perhaps universal—in human behavior, and possibly within limited ranges in the behavior of lower animals. "Why won't the car start?" "Perhaps the battery has 'run down.'" "Maybe it's due to moisture on the spark plugs." "The coil may be worn out." These are hunches which serve to direct further investigation.

The next step in the thinking process involves investigation, analysis, exploration, and interpretation in order to test the hypotheses. In simple practical problems this step may be carried out almost concurrently with the formulation of the hypotheses. "It's not likely to be the coil because the car is new." "The humidity has been very high, making condensation on the spark plugs likely." A quick check may reveal the accuracy of this hypothesis, and the problem is solved. In other cases the problem situation might be such as to require months and even years of patient investigation, as in the case of the making of the atom bomb. The essence of the step is that the hypothesis is regarded as tentative, incomplete, and unsatisfactory as a solution of the problem until data are discovered and applied which give it support. Because scientists have refused to accept even plausible hypotheses without painstaking research, they have been able to transform our technology. The same attitude and method applied to social, economic, and political problems would transform our culture.



The final steps in the Dewey analysis call for elaboration, modification, and refinement of the formulated hypotheses in the light of adequate data and action based upon the results.

This interpretation of reflective behavior covers the widest possible variety of human experience. In all behavior that is not purely automatic or mechanical, the mediating process functions. From the simplest examples of conscious behavior to the most creative behavior, the functioning of the hypothesis, the "guess," the provisional try, to use Hilgard's expression, is the key to man's potentiality to re-create his world. It is true that many problems are highly charged with emotion or personal interest in the outcome of deliberation, and that it is difficult for the individual to cast aside his feelings or desire to reach a specific conclusion, but the fact does not negate the process or the desirability of working with young people to be more objective, to develop attitudes of open-mindedness, and the like.

The doctrine of transfer of training, which fell into disrepute with the demolition of the faculty theory of mind, takes on new meaning. It is part and parcel of the thinking process itself. As Bode points out, "Transfer of training means the extension or application of meanings to new problems or new situations."<sup>27</sup> Thus, if the concepts or generalizations (meanings) gained in one learning situation are applicable to the new situation, they may be used in process of solving the new problem. Of course, this does not result automatically or even by building up the "habit" of thinking, but rather by the continuous enrichment of concepts. The richer the concepts or meanings, the greater is the likelihood that the old and the new situations will have common "elements," and hence that transfer will take place.

This brief exposition of the experimentalist theory of learning indicates its kinship to gestalt, field, and organismic theories. In fact, to some extent it relies for supporting evidence upon these theories.<sup>28</sup> It has found fairly general acceptance among educators who have tried hard to create an educational environment which would implement the ideals and goals of our democratic culture.

We have now completed our brief excursion into the labyrinth of

<sup>27</sup> Boyd H. Bode, *Fundamentals of Education*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1922, p. 154.

<sup>28</sup> Actually the theory was advanced by Dewey before the experiments of Kohler, Koffka, and Lewin, but data from their experiments helped to reinforce the experimentalist point of view.

learning theory. Unfortunately the theoretical psychologists have been preoccupied with objective and quantitative experiments in animal learning, and the behavior of human beings is often *inferred* from that of cats, rats, and pigeons, while educators have been concerned with the applicability of theories to classroom learning situations. The educator wants and needs help from the experimental psychologist in achieving the goals of the individual and the free society, but the experimental psychologist has other problems to worry about.<sup>29</sup> Meanwhile the best the educator can do is to ask: "What does psychology say about the possibility of creating an effective learning environment in line with democratic aspirations?" There are a number of generalizations that can be made that would have the support of some—but not all—theories of learning. A number of these follow.

### SOME BASIC GENERALIZATIONS CONCERNING LEARNING

A. *Learning is an active process which involves the dynamic interaction of the learner and his environment.* The learner is no longer regarded as a passive organism which responds to external stimuli in a mechanical manner. As early as 1928, V. T. Thayer, after examining the psycho-biological evidence concerning learning, stated: "The child's nature is not a mystic scroll wrapped and sealed waiting the favorable circumstances which will enable it to unroll in a pre-ordained manner. Nor is the child's nature to be conceived of as alien material which must be worked over according to preconceived plans."<sup>30</sup>

Considered in isolation, this generalization does not move us very far in the direction of evolving an acceptable methodology for education. It does, however, dispel the notion—long prevalent in education—that the school can successfully impose a fixed body of subject matter upon youth without taking into account its nature, needs, and previous experiences. On the other hand, those who place the learner on a pedestal—relying upon some process of unfolding of innate capabilities for a sense of direction—are guilty of an equally disastrous distortion.

<sup>29</sup> See William H. Estes' article on Learning in *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, Third Edition, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1960, pp. 752-767. He says: "There is reason to believe that hope of eventual *rapprochement* between the laboratory and the classroom approaches to human learning, although presently somewhat Utopian, does not outrun the bounds of possibility." (p. 767)

<sup>30</sup> V. T. Thayer, *The Passing of the Recitation*, Boston, D. C. Heath and Company, 1928, p. 118.

A closer look at this generalization reveals the enormous complexity of the task of education. To be freed from erroneous conceptions of the learner and the learning process is a gain, but it does not provide help in the redirection of learning.

It must be recognized that, given a human being with enormous capacities for acquiring new modes of behavior, the problem still remains as to what values, understandings, habits, and skills will be most effective as he grows toward maturity.

The learnings which will be acquired are profoundly affected by the culture. The environment is a potent influence. From the biological point of view, the environment may provide the conditions for meeting the purely physical needs which have to do with physical survival and development. The environment must provide favorable conditions for good health—food, shelter, recreation. If these conditions are not present, normal physical growth cannot take place, and emotional needs, such as feelings of security, achievement, belongingness, and affection, are thwarted. This raises the whole problem of the social responsibility of the culture for providing the conditions for healthful living.

But the culture affects learning in even more significant ways. The child is born into a culture which is a going concern. On every hand he is confronted with an environment in which accepted values and patterns of behavior strike at him and determine to a large extent his responses—that is, what he learns.

If the environment is relatively simple, he may master the modes of behavior required for mature living in that environment in a relatively short period of time. In primitive societies induction into the culture may be accomplished without much "formal" education, for very early the child participates directly in the life of the adult community. It would be fair to state that he gradually acquires the set of values, philosophy, or life style—call it what you will—that is characteristic of that culture.

In complex modern societies, the process of acculturation is more complicated. Science and technology have profoundly affected the sheer mechanics of living. In some respects the environment demands less of the learner since so many tasks associated with the meeting of biological needs are cared for by others. The period of infancy is prolonged. In most respects, however, the environment demands more, since the race experience becomes more highly organized and hence less accessible. Long preparation is needed to develop the attitudes and understandings

and to acquire the habits and skills that are considered essential to effective citizenship.

The problem of growing up is especially complicated and difficult in our democratic culture because our values are less clearly defined than those in a totalitarian culture. The child is confronted with a confused environment, particularly in a period of great national and international stress. Personal values are confused because they are dynamic rather than static. Furthermore, a definite and precious aspect of our value system is the belief in the capacity of young people to resolve their conflicts through intelligence, rather than to have attitudes and understandings indoctrinated by adults. There will be more discussion of this point later on.

B. *Learning is most effective when the learner is motivated by goals which are intrinsic to the activity.* This generalization is closely related to the one discussed above which states that learning takes place when the learner and the environment are involved in dynamic interaction. Equilibrium is disturbed, and the organism acts in an attempt to restore it. We are now concerned with the factors which motivate the learner to act in the direction of achieving his goal. In this sense, goal is defined as the "end state" which gives direction to behavior in a given learning situation.

Hilgard and Russell have formulated definitions which are helpful in clarifying this generalization. They are as follows:

The relationship between goals and the learning tasks related to them may be described as intrinsic or extrinsic, depending on the logical relationship between the task and the goal.

The relationship between task and goal may be said to be *intrinsic* if the incentive conditions are functionally or organically related to the activity. Thus the satisfaction derived from hearing a program over a self-constructed radio set is a satisfaction derived from putting the radio to its intended use. This is an intrinsic satisfaction, because the goal is inherent in the successful completion of the task of construction.

The relationship between task and goal may be said to be *extrinsic* if the incentive conditions are artificially or arbitrarily related to the task. Thus if a prize is to be awarded to the first boy to complete his radio, the desire for the prize is extrinsically related to the task of radio-building.

Because motivational situations are complex, the relation between the task and goal is often at once intrinsic and extrinsic.<sup>21</sup>

All theories of learning stress the significance of motive. The organismic theory, however, tends to give greater emphasis to the total situation in which learning takes place, because of the importance of concomitant learnings. In the illustration quoted above, the accomplishment of building the first radio is, in and of itself, less significant than the emotional satisfaction derived by the youngster from having his need met. The teacher would, of course, also be interested in the extent to which the attitudes, understandings, and skills learned are likely to be utilized in meeting new situations. This is more likely to happen if the motivation is intrinsic to the task.

It is difficult to organize the life of the school in a highly complex society in which there are of necessity many deferred values, in such a way as to promote intrinsic motivation. A good clue is to place more emphasis upon direct first-hand experiences growing out of the problems of the students, than upon the transmission of racial experience through organized subject matter. This sends us on to our third generalization.

*C. The most significant type of learning in a democratic society is characterized by reflective thinking, rather than by mechanical habit formation.* The perpetuation and refinement of democracy depends to a large extent upon whether or not citizens can be taught to have faith in the method of intelligence as a method of solving problems and to use it consistently in daily living. This is unquestionably an ideal deeply rooted in our heritage. If it should be established by scientific research that it is not possible to educate the masses to carry out this ideal, democracy will be replaced by some totalitarian form of government in which decisions will be made by a small group of leaders, scrupulous or unscrupulous, depending upon the group that seizes the power.

The meaning of reflective thinking as we are now using the term was defined earlier in the chapter. In brief, it is the process of arriving at solutions of problems through "active, persistent inquiry"; through the examination and evaluation of data guided by hypotheses. It implies openmindedness, suspension of judgment, basing action upon the conclusions reached from the inquiry, rather than upon whim, caprice, or the uncritical acceptance of authority.

The point of view expressed in the generalization which we have been discussing is that utilizing reflective thinking in problem solving is inseparably connected with the perpetuation and refinement of our democ-

<sup>2</sup> Ernest R. Hilgard and David H. Russell in *Learning and Instruction*, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

racy. Does psychology hold promise that this type of learning is more than a philosophical ideal, that human beings can and do behave reflectively, and that the process can be taught?

Stimulus-response theories of learning have tended to emphasize mechanical modes of learning. Most of the theories evolved from animal experiments—cats in puzzle boxes, rats in mazes, and the like—but even so, there seems to be a general acceptance among stimulus-response theorists that there is a type of learning that involves a process of mediation. The issue lies in the explanation of this process rather than the *fact* of its existence.

On the other hand, as has been shown in the discussion of cognitive theories, gestalt, field, organismic, and, of course, experimentalist give a larger place to reflective thinking.

The least that we can say as a result of our brief excursion into the nature of the thinking process and the viewpoint of the various schools of psychological thought is that while the process is not clearly understood, the *fact* of the existence of "careful, painstaking inquiry" is affirmed by abundant experimental data. This at least gives the educator a "green light" in organizing the life of the school in such a way as to facilitate reflective learning and to cultivate in students a genuine desire to apply intelligence to problems of living. Clearly, the ability of the individual to deal effectively with a problematic situation requiring the setting up of hypotheses certainly is conditioned by what we might call effective intelligence—or the ability to see a wide variety of relationships. Individuals vary widely with respect to this ability, and failure to meet problem situations may be due to lack of native capacity as inferred from performance. It has been well established, however, that improvement can be made through the use of appropriate learning experiences. We do not have adequate data on the percentage of the general population which to some degree can be taught to utilize reflective thinking effectively. Basically the use of inference is a very elemental trait of human beings.

Dewey pointed out many years ago that a being who cannot think without training cannot be trained to think. Unfortunately the practice of training in thinking has not been widespread in the schools and until major emphasis is placed by educators upon creating the conditions that promote and reward thought, we shall have to operate on faith that the ideal of human freedom based upon intelligent action is possible in terms of what is known about the nature of human beings and the thinking process.

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It is difficult to organize the life of the school in a highly complex society in which there are of necessity many deferred values, in such a way as to promote intrinsic motivation. A good clue is to place more emphasis upon direct first-hand experiences growing out of the problems of the students, than upon the transmission of racial experience through organized subject matter. This sends us on to our third generalization.

*C. The most significant type of learning in a democratic society is characterized by reflective thinking, rather than by mechanical habit formation.* The perpetuation and refinement of democracy depends to a large extent upon whether or not citizens can be taught to have faith in the method of intelligence as a method of solving problems and to use it consistently in daily living. This is unquestionably an ideal deeply rooted in our heritage. If it should be established by scientific research that it is not possible to educate the masses to carry out this ideal, democracy will be replaced by some totalitarian form of government in which decisions will be made by a small group of leaders, scrupulous or unscrupulous, depending upon the group that seizes the power.

The meaning of reflective thinking as we are now using the term was defined earlier in the chapter. In brief, it is the process of arriving at solutions of problems through "active, persistent inquiry"; through the examination and evaluation of data guided by hypotheses. It implies openmindedness, suspension of judgment, basing action upon the conclusions reached from the inquiry, rather than upon whim, caprice, or the uncritical acceptance of authority.

The point of view expressed in the generalization which we have been discussing is that utilizing reflective thinking in problem solving is inseparably connected with the perpetuation and refinement of our democ-

<sup>21</sup> Ernest R. Hilgard and David H. Russell in *Learning and Instruction*, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

racy. Does psychology hold promise that this type of learning is more than a philosophical ideal, that human beings can and do behave reflectively, and that the process can be taught?

Stimulus-response theories of learning have tended to emphasize *mechanical modes of learning*. Most of the theories evolved from animal experiments—cats in puzzle boxes, rats in mazes, and the like—but even so, there seems to be a general acceptance among stimulus-response theorists that there is a type of learning that involves a process of mediation. The issue lies in the explanation of this process rather than the *fact* of its existence.

On the other hand, as has been shown in the discussion of cognitive theories, gestalt, field, organismic, and, of course, experimentalist give a larger place to reflective thinking.

The least that we can say as a result of our brief excursion into the nature of the thinking process and the viewpoint of the various schools of psychological thought is that while the process is not clearly understood, the *fact* of the existence of "careful, painstaking inquiry" is affirmed by abundant experimental data. This at least gives the educator a "green light" in organizing the life of the school in such a way as to facilitate reflective learning and to cultivate in students a genuine desire to apply intelligence to problems of living. Clearly, the ability of the individual to deal effectively with a problematic situation requiring the setting up of hypotheses certainly is conditioned by what we might call effective intelligence—or the ability to see a wide variety of relationships. Individuals vary widely with respect to this ability, and failure to meet problem situations may be due to lack of native capacity as inferred from performance. It has been well established, however, that improvement can be made through the use of appropriate learning experiences. We do not have adequate data on the percentage of the general population which to some degree can be taught to utilize reflective thinking effectively. Basically the use of inference is a very elemental trait of human beings.

Dewey pointed out many years ago that a being who cannot think without training cannot be trained to think. Unfortunately the practice of training in thinking has not been widespread in the schools and until major emphasis is placed by educators upon creating the conditions that promote and reward thought, we shall have to operate on faith that the ideal of human freedom based upon intelligent action is possible in terms of what is known about the nature of human beings and the thinking process.



D. *When problems are of common concern, group thinking is the most effective approach to learning.* While it is true that reflective behavior is a process of interaction between an individual and his environment, when that environment is made up of individuals seeking a similar goal, it is proper to think of group problem solving. This important aspect of modern education will be discussed more fully in a later chapter. It should be pointed out here that modern psychology has given much emphasis to group dynamics. Thorndike presents a number of findings that summarize the present status which he refers to as "social problem-solving." These are his generalizations:

1. The group typically brings a broader background of experience to a problem situation than does an individual.
2. As a reflection of 1, the group is likely to produce more and varied suggestions for dealing with the problem than will arise from a single individual.
3. The diversity of viewpoints is likely to be more representative of the larger population from which they are drawn than is the viewpoint of a single individual.
4. As diversity of background and interest within the group becomes greater, it becomes increasingly difficult to reach a real agreement among the members of the group as to the definition of the problem and the values to be served. Reconciliation of conflicting goals becomes a real problem.
5. Just as a group is likely to produce a greater range of suggestions, so also a group is likely to be more productive in criticisms of proposals and bases for rejecting them.
6. Interstimulation is a distinctive feature of group effort. The suggestion by X, which is criticized by Y, serves as the stimulus to Z for a new and quite different suggestion.
7. Interpersonal dynamics becomes a significant element. The assertive, the dogmatic, and the persuasive individual each plays a distinctive role.
8. With increasing size and diversity of group membership, unity and integration of effort are often difficult to achieve. Group members may show a tendency to "ride off in all directions."<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Robert L. Thorndike, *Learning and Instruction*, op. cit., p. 209. See also William Clark Trow, Alvin E. Zander, William C. Morse, and David Jenkins, "Psychology of Group Behavior: The Class as a Group," in *Educational Psychology for Teachers*, Studies in Education, National Society of College Teachers of Education, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, 1950, pp. 322-331; Kenneth D. Beane and Bozidar Muntyan, *Human Relations in Curriculum Change*, Curricular Series A, No. 51, Illinois Secondary School Curriculum Program Bulletin No. 7, Springfield, Illinois, State Department of Public Instruction, 1950 (Now published by the Dryden Press.); *The Dynamics of Instructional Groups*, Fifty-ninth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1960.

Group thinking is a process highly prized in our democratic society, for only through the use of this process can democratic institutions, programs, and policies be evaluated effectively, and constructive changes proposed. Consequently it becomes one of the foundation stones of methodology in the high school.

E. *Skills, attitudes, appreciations, and understandings are most effectively developed as a unified whole rather than each in isolation from the others.* This generalization represents a clear break with the stimulus-response school of thought and with traditional classroom practices. Specific teaching techniques for the various types of subject matter have been highly developed. A considerable amount of the time given over to the professional education of the teacher is devoted to the mastery of these techniques. Drill lessons, appreciation lessons, and thinking lessons are still thought of as separate and distinct entities. As was pointed out earlier, these practices have their roots in the S-R bond theory of learning.

There would seem to be a trend in psychological thinking toward a unitary concept of learning. To the gestalt or organismic school must go the credit for this development. This group has insisted that the "whole is greater than the sum of its parts," that "parts derive their properties from the whole," that the learner responds to the total field rather than to separate isolated elements of the field.

The relationship between motor learning and thinking is stressed by Ragsdale as follows:

Some instructors have seized upon one phase of the process, as the kinesthetic or the affective, and have built a teaching "system" around it, but such a system is as one-sided as was the view of some psychologists who once stated that rats used only kinesthesia in learning mazes because blind, deaf, anosmic rats could learn mazes. We have muscles and use them in motor learning; we have kinesthetic sense organs, eyes, ears, and skin senses and use all of them; we have language and use it, we have thinking processes and use them. We collect data about action for all available sources and use them in learning motor skills as fully as our individual intelligence permits. Reflective thinking is the key to this as in all areas.<sup>33</sup>

Some writers have attempted to show that a distinctive and unique type of learning is involved in the learning of appreciations. Morrison builds a separate teaching type around the claim that the development of

<sup>33</sup> C. E. Ragsdale in *Learning and Instruction*, op. cit., p. 89.

appreciations is different from the acquisition of skills, or training in reflective thinking. The current trend toward the use of programmed learning and so-called teaching machines is very likely to result in an extension of the traditional concept of different types of learning. Most of the proposals seem to violate the principle of learning as a unitary process. Even though it may be demonstrated that the mastery of certain knowledge is effective when what is to be learned is broken into fragments and learned sequentially with continuous reinforcement, we still must consider whether such learning is conducive to the seeing of relationships and whether it furthers the integrative process.

If we ever decide to approach learning as a unitary process involving differing learning products, our curriculums and classroom procedures will undergo revolutionary changes.

*F. Transfer of training is most effective when the learning situation is so organized as to facilitate generalization and the recognition of relationships.* For half a century a controversy has raged over the problem of whether learning one kind of material helped in learning another kind of material—or as Hilgard, who designates it as one of the six major problems in theories of learning, puts it: "Does learning one thing help you to learn something else?"<sup>24</sup>

In general the stimulus-response psychologists are extremely skeptical of transfer. Thorndike conducted many experiments, one of the most significant of which dealt with the effect of instruction in each of the various school subjects upon the student's ability to reason. He found that the differences were so small as to be negligible. Later he developed the "identical elements" theory of transfer which, though the elements were mechanical, gave a larger place to transfer. Later stimulus-response psychologists place some emphasis upon transfer, but it seems to be rather peripheral.<sup>25</sup>

The Gestaltists and field theorists hold to quite a different view. Their experiments, as it has been shown, have dealt with situations involving the use of insight into a field containing many potential relationships rather than with specific learning situations. Hilgard sums up the position thus:

<sup>24</sup> Ernest R. Hilgard, *Theories of Learning*, Second Edition, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956, p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> For an interesting article dealing with transfer, see William Clark Trow, "The Problem of Transfer, Then and Now," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XL, 68-71 (November, 1958).

The Gestalt concept most like that of transfer is *transposition*. A pattern of dynamic relationships discovered or understood in one situation may be applicable to another. . . . There is something in common between the earlier learning and the situation in which transfer is found, but what exists in common is not identical piecemeal elements, but common patterns, configurations, or relationships. One of the advantages of learning by understanding rather than by rote process is that understanding is transposable to wider ranges of situations, and less often leads to erroneous applications of old learning.<sup>36</sup>

Obviously the problem of transfer has great significance for the curriculum maker. With the proliferation of knowledge, it becomes increasingly necessary to teach for transfer.

The emphasis of the Experimentalists, following the lead of Dewey, has always been placed upon the creative aspects of learning. Dewey's much-quoted definition of education as the reconstruction of experience implies that as concepts are enriched by new experiences they gain in applicability to situations of greater and greater complexity. The concept is the basis for the formulation of the hypothesis. This is just another way of saying that transfer of training takes place when the learner applies old meanings (concepts) to new situations. Every case of genuine reflective thinking is, therefore, a case of transfer of training.

G. *The development and modification of attitudes is a problem of learning which has great significance for the future of our democratic society.* Reduced to its simplest terms an attitude is a tendency or predisposition to respond in a certain manner to a given set of stimulating conditions.

In more technical terms it may be regarded as a "mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related."<sup>37</sup> Perhaps even more than other learning, it involves a dynamic interaction between the individual and his environment. The learner's self-concept is charged with dispositions and tendencies to act in terms of his life goals.

Individuals acquire attitudes in many ways. Many of the attitudes which an individual holds are simply a set of beliefs which he has taken

<sup>36</sup> Hilgard, *op. cit.*, pp. 252-253.

<sup>37</sup> Quoted from Gordon Allport by Dale Harris in *Learning and Instruction, op. cit.*, p. 130.

over ready-made from some other person or group. Young children often accept uncritically the attitudes of parents. One may accept the point of view of another concerning the Republican party without ever having examined it. The same may be true concerning religious beliefs, prejudices concerning race, or problems of morality. Attitudes may also arise from some very vivid experience which is then generalized into a disposition or set. For example, a person may have had an unpleasant experience with a dog, and come to dislike or even hate *all* dogs. Probably the most common origin of attitudes is the gradual integration of a number of similar experiences, in the same manner as one builds a concept of "roundness" by seeing a number of objects each of which has the property of being round. Certainly that is the way the school seeks to develop "right" attitudes.

The process of attitude development is of course important in all cultures. The totalitarian states permit no choice to the individual in the attitudes which he holds toward the ruler, or the state. Thus the method of intelligence or reflective thinking which has been stressed in this and the preceding chapter has no chance to operate.

In our society the case is quite different. Democracy places a heavy responsibility upon the individual to "make up his own mind" on what he believes. And because he is free to do so he is bombarded on all sides by propaganda designed to influence him. It reaches into every aspect of living and utilizes very subtle techniques which are not easily detected.

The development and modification of attitudes, then, is one of the major problems in learning, and unfortunately a good deal of research needs to be done before the effectiveness of different procedures is known. We do know, however, that attitudes can be changed but that the process is a slow one. We know also that the climate in which learning takes place has a great deal to do with the effectiveness of the instruction. For help in this field, the educator must turn to the social psychologists and sociologists rather than to learning theorists.<sup>38</sup>

In terms of the democratic ideal of faith in intelligence, it is highly desirable to develop teaching and learning procedures that utilize re-

<sup>38</sup> See *Learning and Instruction*, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-155; Eugene and Ruth E. Hartley, *Fundamentals of Social Psychology*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1952, Chapters XX-XXII. For an exhaustive analysis of the research in this field see: Saul B. Sells and David K. Trites, "Attitudes," *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, Third Edition, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1960, pp. 102-112; and for research in the school's effectiveness in changing attitudes, see *Ibid.*, 1291-1296. This article was prepared by J. Wayne Wrightstone.

reflective thinking in changing attitudes, rather than to resort to the tactics of the propagandists. Democracy and indoctrination are antithetical. The freedom of the learner to develop his own attitudes and to weave them into a consistent pattern of living should not be violated. The school should, however, help him to develop techniques for evaluating data and for using reflective thinking. It should also resist the many pressure groups which are anxious to utilize the school to inculcate their cherished beliefs. The school needs to recognize that it has a special responsibility in this respect because its students, in a real sense, constitute a "captive audience."

### SUMMARY

1. The task of the educator is to utilize the most effective principles of learning for promoting democratic values.
2. In general, the organismic or field theories of learning seem most congenial to the purposes of the democratic school.
3. It is possible to develop generalizations concerning learning for the guidance of the teacher in the classroom. The following are important ones:
  - a. Learning is an active process which involves the dynamic interaction of the learner and his environment.
  - b. Learning is most effective when the learner is motivated by goals which are intrinsic to the activity.
  - c. The most significant type of learning in a democratic society is characterized by reflective thinking, rather than by mechanical habit formation.
  - d. When problems are of common concern, group thinking is the most effective approach to learning.
  - e. Skills, appreciations, attitudes, and understandings are most effectively developed as a unified whole rather than each in isolation from the others.
  - f. Transfer of training is most effective when the learning situation is so organized as to facilitate generalization and the recognition of relationships.
  - g. The development and modification of attitudes is a problem of learning which has great significance in our democratic society. In this area social psychologists are of more assistance than learning theorists.

## *The Adolescent in American Society*



WE HAVE ATTEMPTED to set forth in previous chapters conflicting conceptions of educational goals as well as conflicting conceptions of the nature of the learning process. The authors believe that the optimal development of the individual as a responsible member of our dynamic, ever-changing, democratic society is the goal of education which holds the greatest promise for the future. If we are to achieve this goal, education must resist all attempts to make the school an instrument of national policy. We need also to combat the ever-growing danger of fitting young people into molds of our own design. In other words, the curriculum must be consistent with the nature of our goals and continuously adapted to the changing role of youth in our society. For this reason, it seems appropriate, before determining the design of a curriculum for high-school youth, to examine the nature of the adolescent, the stresses and strains that operate upon him, his problems and needs conceived in a broad sense as growing out of his interaction with the culture. We do this in the hope that it will provide clues that will be helpful in designing a curriculum.

### ADOLESCENCE AND THE HIGH SCHOOL PERIOD

The high-school period (grades seven through twelve or fourteen) corresponds roughly to the period of adolescence which has been defined as "a development period which extends from the end of childhood to the beginning of adulthood." This definition does not help much, for it

is far from clear when childhood ends and adulthood begins. Growth is more or less a continuous process and, hence, any one stage defies accurate definition. We do know, however, that childhood is a period of almost complete dependency, while adulthood implies a large measure of social and economic independence. The nature of adolescence is not clearly defined because it is an "in-between period" which is characterized by continuous physical, social, intellectual, and emotional change. Roughly, we may say that it is the period beginning at about age twelve and extending to ages nineteen or twenty, but here again it is necessary to be extremely cautious because chronological age is not a very reliable index of development toward maturity. Then, too, it must be admitted that many people never do achieve maturity.

There are, however, certain characteristics of individuals during this middle, or transitional, period that are sufficiently common to justify a study of high-school youth. For our present purposes, it seems feasible to regard the term "early adolescence" as applicable to the lower grades of the six-year high school, and "late adolescence" to the upper grades and to the first two years of the college period. It must be pointed out, too, that trends in development toward adult status are applicable only in general, and that such trends are only suggestive as clues in understanding a particular individual or small group.

### SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ADOLESCENCE

Unfortunately there are a great many misconceptions concerning the adolescent period.<sup>1</sup> Many of them are deep-seated and continue to influence the attitude of the teacher toward the adolescent. The most generally held belief, which has been completely discredited, is that the behavior of the adolescent is the result of innate tendencies which cause him to "recapitulate" the experiences of the race. This doctrine was popularized by G. Stanley Hall.<sup>2</sup> It was held that little could be done about it. The adolescent simply went through the stages of development more or less automatically. Selfishness, greed, and possessiveness were explained in terms of the history of man and nations. The individual's behavior was regarded as the inevitable result of "the pent-up forces of

<sup>1</sup> See Hedley S. Dimock, *et al.*, *Rediscovering the Adolescent*, New York, D. Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1937, pp. 254-255.

<sup>2</sup> See G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence*, New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1905, Vols. I-II.



the greed of thousands of years." Later on, generosity, altruism, and other desirable traits sprang up just as naturally because they are but later expressions of man's slow struggle toward civilization. The effect of this doctrine was, of course, to encourage a *laissez faire* attitude toward the development of the adolescent. Teachers and parents had to put up with the little savage who was in the process of moving from savagery to civilization. Rousseau's conception of the inherent goodness of human nature fitted neatly into this theory. Since human nature was regarded as good, it was only necessary to keep the child from the contaminating influence of a depraved society and let his impulses develop. This doctrine, needless to say, influenced the early "child-centered" school profoundly.

Another misconception for which Hall and his followers were largely responsible was that adolescence represented a cataclysmic change which transformed the child almost overnight into a different kind of being. "Adolescence is a new birth, for the higher and more completely human traits are now born. The qualities of the body and soul that now emerge are far newer. The child comes from and looks back to a remoter past; the adolescent is neo-atavistic, and in him the later acquisitions of the race slowly become prepotent. Development is less gradual and more saltatory, suggestive of some ancient period of storm and stress when old moorings were broken and a higher level attained."<sup>3</sup>

The fact that noticeable physical changes take place at puberty lends color to this theory. However, even these changes have been shown to be more or less gradual and really only external indications of change. Another aspect of this misconception is the belief that during adolescence powers of reasoning and judgment spring into being. The moral sense is also supposed to flower with the result that the adolescent suddenly develops deep religious concerns. We are now reasonably certain that no new traits develop during the period of adolescence. Many of the differences which we observe in adolescent behavior can be traced to the environment in which youth grows up. This is well illustrated by the following quotation:

There are many reasons to believe that adolescence may be threatening to parents. Threats of parental authority and moral codes and exposure of offspring to physical risks (such as teenage driving) may well generate a fair amount of anxiety. And parents whose teenager does not conform in per-

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. xii.

sonality, aspirations, or accomplishments to the ideal envisioned by parents for their offspring may have problems of accepting the youngster for what he is now that personality formation is viewed as essentially complete. These threats may result in some cases in parental ambivalence and in more pressure being put on the adolescent. In such homes there is likely to be mounting family conflict.<sup>4</sup>

The stressful behaviors manifested by the adolescent, according to the above writer, may actually exist in parents and teachers "who are disturbed. . . by threats to their authority and moral codes and who project their own stress into the youngsters."<sup>5</sup>

These misconceptions are partly responsible for the fact that the junior high school was set up as a more or less separate institution. The adolescent, now being a new person, required a new type of institution. The marked shift in curriculum and method at the junior high-school level is directly related to this theory. It has also been asserted that the elementary school should center upon the inculcation of fixed habits and skills, while the high school should develop reflective thinking, presumably because new intellectual traits came into being with the onset of adolescence. A great deal of harm has been done to students because of this practice for which there seems to be little support in fact as determined by research.

## **SOME PROBLEMS OF GROWING UP**

Adolescence is truly an in-between stage of development. Kurt Lewin appropriately likens the adolescent to the "marginal man," who stands on the boundary between two groups but is accepted by neither. He is really in a "no-man's land."<sup>6</sup> Parents and teachers have misunderstood him. If he acts "grown up," he is reminded that he is still a child. If he

<sup>4</sup> Raymond G. Kuhlen, "Adolescence," in *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, Third Edition, p. 28. Copyright 1960 by The Macmillan Company, New York, used with their permission.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26. The author of the article suggests this as "not an unreasonable hypothesis." See also: Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, New York, William Morrow and Co., 1928; Eugene L. and Ruth E. Hartley, *Fundamentals of Social Psychology*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1952, Chapter VIII.

<sup>6</sup> See his excellent article abstracted in: Jerome Seidman, ed., *The Adolescent—A Book of Readings*, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1960, pp. 32-42. The article, entitled "The Field Theory Approach to Adolescence," was published in *American Journal of Sociology*, II, 868-897 (1939).

conflict are the seeds which may result in creative self-realization or delinquency.<sup>11</sup>

In more recent years considerable research has been done on the problem of how best to help youth to move from childhood to adulthood. This research has been directed toward studies of adolescent behavior. A number of the leading studies will be presented under the following headings: (1) The Adolescent Needs Concept, (2) The Developmental Tasks Concept, and (3) The Adolescent Problems Concept.

### THE ADOLESCENT NEEDS CONCEPT

As a reaction against the adult-centered curriculum, a number of proposals to base the curriculum upon adolescent needs have been made in recent years. The proponents of this plan hold that what is wrong with high-school education is that the curriculum has been dominated largely by the demands of the adult world. They hold that the remedy is to be found in a reversal of the whole procedure in curriculum making. The adolescent must be studied, his needs determined, and a curriculum designed to meet his needs must be provided. Like many other terms in educational literature, the needs concept is a vague one. It is used by people in many different ways. Often in the course of a discussion, it is used by the same writer in different ways. This results in confusion. Many of the arguments for and against basing a curriculum on adolescent needs are mere verbal differences that arise because the participants have differing conceptions of the meaning of "meeting the needs of students." At the risk of adding further to the confusion an attempt will now be made to discuss and perhaps reconcile the differing conceptions, and to explore the possibilities of utilizing the needs approach in curriculum development.

<sup>11</sup> See *Time*, LXXVII, 34-35 (February 10, 1961) for a new version of the revolt of youth against conformity. Conservative organizations of students are springing up in the colleges. "The new trend is youth's natural rebellion against conformity, and to many the liberalism of their New Deal-bred elders is the most ironbound conformity. 'My parents thought Franklin D. Roosevelt was one of the greatest heroes that ever lived,' says the V.A.F. Chairman, Yale Law Student Robert Schuchman, 22. 'I'm rebelling against that concept.' Says President Roger Claus of Wisconsin's Conservative Club, 'You walk around with your Goldwater button, and you feel the thrill of treason.'" For a point of view somewhat at variance, see: Jacob W. Getzels, "The Problem of Values, Value Changes, and Personal Identity in Education: Some Recent Studies," *Frontiers of Education*, IV, Syracuse, New York, Syracuse University Press, 1960, Chapter V.



*Courtesy, Fairmont Heights High School*

Art is an effective medium for creative self-expression and may help the adolescent to achieve "self-definition."

An art student at work—Fairmont Heights High School, Prince George's County, Md. The photograph represents the final phase of a unit of work in which students were learning how to depict more convincing figures in painting and sculpture.

**Conflicting concepts of needs** Perhaps the most common interpretation of needs is that they are drives, tensions, biological urges in the individual that determine action. Some of the tensions or urges are vague and poorly defined by the individual, others are clear-cut and definite, dominated by a goal or purpose. The need for food is an example of a basic elemental need. A dominating purpose to become a lawyer is a more complex and comprehensive need, but both are characterized by a biological tension or urge. Between the indefinite restlessness that may characterize at first the need for food, and the organized feeling of need to become a lawyer, is a complete range of drives that often are spoken of as problems, interests, whims, wishes, desires, longings, or purposes. Perhaps the term, *psychobiological*<sup>12</sup> need, best characterizes this concept of needs. Obviously they are of an infinite number and are peculiar to each individual, shifting continuously as the individual develops. The so-called child-centered schools lean heavily upon this interpretation.

In contrast to this psychobiological concept, many people speak of the needs of the adolescent in terms of his deficiencies or "lacks" as seen by adults. Adolescence is, as has been pointed out, an "in-between" period. Growing up simply means moving from the immature world of the child to the mature world of the adult. What sort of an adult should the adolescent become? The answer is to be found in the adult's conception of what he believes a desirable adult world to be. It may be one dominated by the academic tradition, in which case the adult will claim that Johnny needs to know Shakespeare, to be familiar with classical music, or to be able to read Plato in the original. Or if the adult happens to be primarily interested in refining the concept of democratic living, then he will proclaim that Johnny needs to be tolerant, to be socially sensitive, to use the method of intelligence, and to learn how to cooperate for common ends. If the adult is primarily concerned with the practical world, he will insist that Johnny needs to learn a trade, to be able to repair a short circuit in the lighting system of the home, or to select becoming clothes. Needs of this sort are called *predicated needs* by Doane. For our present purpose we may think of this concept of needs as embracing the *requirements, demands, or standards of society*. Thought of in terms

<sup>12</sup> See Donald C. Doane, *The Needs of Youth*, Teachers College, Columbia University, Contribution to Education, No. 848, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1942, p. 4.

of the adolescent, they are translated into "lacks" or "shortcomings" that ought to be eliminated if the adolescent is to become the sort of adult that is held to be desirable. Needs, defined in this manner, obviously have no *necessary* connection with what is *felt* by the adolescent at any given time. Needs of this sort are discovered by an analysis of society or by traditional concepts of the educated man, as seen through the eyes of the academician, not by an analysis of adolescent behavior.<sup>13</sup>

It is easy to see that these two concepts of needs conflict insofar as the high school curriculum is concerned. If we accept the second interpretation, we study the demands of the social order, its ideals, values, shortcomings, and the like. We then utilize our knowledge of the adolescent to motivate him to learn the sort of behavior that is revealed as *necessary in the kind of world in which he is growing up, or the kind of world the curriculum maker wants to build*. Obviously, when we are arguing about needs, we had better be fairly certain of whether we are *using the term to refer to biological tensions or to social demands or requirements*.

But the resolution of the difficulty is not a simple matter of accepting *one or the other as the basis of curriculum reorganization*. Acceptance of the first leads to all of the abuses and excesses of the child-centered curriculum. To accept the second opens the door to the inclusion of all sorts of traditional materials that in the past have kept the secondary school from becoming a vital and significant institution.

What is the way out of the dilemma? One way, as we have seen, is to accept *both* interpretations and introduce courses to implement each of them. Thus, we might have courses in ancient history, pre-flight aeronautics, electrical repairing, and problems of democracy to meet social demands or requirements; and courses in personal regimen, psychology, or sex education to meet the psychobiological needs. It is obvious that such a program presents an impossible dualism that effectively prevents unification in the school.

Reconciling the conflict    The Commission on the Secondary School

<sup>13</sup> *This interpretation of the concept of needs is having great influence on curriculum making in this decade. The developmental process is largely ignored. Students are "guided into" courses which school officials think they ought to take. See, for example, the curricular prescriptions of James B. Conant in *The American High School Today*, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959, particularly for the "more able students."*

Curriculum<sup>14</sup> has proposed a solution of the problem by a redefinition of the meaning of needs, and the development of a program of curriculum reorganization based upon the new concept. Since this plan is the result of an extensive study over a period of several years, it will be presented in some detail.

Needs are held to be personal-social in character. A need always has two inseparable and interrelated aspects. The first aspect is a biological or somatic tension. It refers to some want or desire that the individual seeks to satisfy, some problem that he wants to solve, some interest that he wants to develop or maintain. But this is only half of the story. Needs do not exist "under the skin of the individual" in isolation from the physical and social environment. They are in continuous interaction with it. Therefore, they cannot be adequately described or defined without taking into account the environmental (social) aspect.

To speak of a need without including both its *personal and social* aspects is to leave out an indispensable element. Merely to say that Johnny wants something or that teacher X believes John needs a particular piece of knowledge, is to leave out the element of interaction between the two necessary components.

Now when the term *need* is used in this manner, it is evident that in any need as it exists at any given moment the two aspects will be present in varying degrees. Indeed, the emphasis shifts back and forth from one aspect to the other. Some needs, such as the "need for self-assurance," are more personal in character, whereas others such as the "need to participate with others in social civic life" show more obviously their involvement in the social scene. But in the case of both of these illustrations, the two aspects are present. Self-assurance cannot be attained except with reference to situa-

<sup>14</sup> This study began in 1932 under the auspices of the Progressive Education Association. It carried on its work through a commission under the direction of V. T. Thayer. The Commission worked through two interrelated activities, a study of adolescents and a study of the curriculum by educators, psychologists, and subject-matter specialists. The studies of the Commission have been published in a series of volumes. Those pertaining to the curriculum, published by the D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., are as follows: Lawrence Conrad (for the Creative Writing Committee), *Teaching Creative Writing* (1937); Committee on the Function of Science in General Education, *Science in General Education* (1938); Committee on the Function of Art in General Education, *The Visual Arts in General Education* (1940); Committee on the Function of English in General Education, *Language in General Education* (1940); Committee on the Function of Mathematics in General Education, *Mathematics in General Education* (1940); Committee on the Function of Social Science in General Education, *Social Science in General Education* (1940); Elbert Lenrow (for the Committee on the Teaching of English in General Education), *Prose Fiction in General Education* (1940).

tions involving the environment, particularly other persons; if it were possible for a person to exist in a vacuum, the problem of self-assurance would never exist for him; on the other hand there would be no participation in social life except because of the needs of individuals. In the first illustration the teacher may be chiefly concerned with establishing fruitful relationships between the individual and environment and directing the "need for self-assurance" into socially desirable channels. In the second illustration, the teacher may be primarily concerned with discovering the personal, individual tension which calls for participation with others and with ways of directing it profitably.<sup>12</sup>

If we accept this interpretation of needs, then a study of the *adolescent in his environment*<sup>13</sup> will reveal not only his wishes, desires, immediate problems, interests, but also the demands, standards, and requirements of the culture that affect him. Out of such a study would arise the identification of basic personal-social needs of the adolescent.

**Classifying the needs of adolescents** The Commission found it helpful to think of the needs of adolescents in terms of their involvement in four basic interrelated aspects of living. It makes no claim of finality for this classification. Other groups, approaching the same problem, would probably utilize different categories. However, after experimentation with several types of organization, the Commission decided that the aspects-of-living concept best expressed the "idea of personal-social relationships, and continuous interaction between the individual and the en-

<sup>12</sup> Committee on the Function of Science in General Education, *op. cit.*, p. 26. The above interpretation of "social" seems to be slightly at variance with the interpretation of the Commission as stated in *Reorganizing Secondary Education*. In that volume "needs as lacks" seem to be identified as the social aspect. A "lack" is defined as the difference "between the personality of the adolescent as it is found and the kind of personality that the school would have him develop." (p. 35). As used in the above context, the social aspects of a need simply refer to the surrounding culture which presses in upon the adolescent; its stresses and strains as they affect him, the demands of the environment. The general statement of position is similar in both volumes. *Science in General Education* is used as the basis of the interpretation because (1) the treatment is simpler, and (2) it was published before *Reorganizing Secondary Education*, and was utilized by the schools of the Eight-Year Study as a basis for curriculum planning, the results of which are used in this volume as illustrations of the proposed technique.

<sup>13</sup> The position of the Commission in defining needs so as to include both aspects has been criticized by Doane, *op. cit.*, p. 48. He claims that it is not possible to interpret all needs as involving both the psychobiological and the predicated (social demands) aspect. He accuses the Commission of incorrectly assuming the biological nature of many of the needs which it sets forth. He sees a danger in this procedure in that by further rationalization "virtually any item of subject matter could be presented as a self-motivating basis for curriculum construction."



(11) Religion, (12) Relationships with Family, (13) Social Competence, (14) Conventional Subject-Matter Areas, (15) Other Areas of Interest. Wishing to avoid asking the student directly what his needs were, the author used the device of describing twenty "courses" which included all of the needs which seemed pertinent. The student was asked to check the five courses which he would most want to take in one year, and the five courses he would least want to take. In order to illustrate what is meant by a "course," the following description of course No. 1 is quoted from the inventory.

Deciding what kind of work you want to do when you finish school. Finding out what kind of work you are best fitted for. Learning how to prepare yourself for the kind of work you intend to do. Finding out what it is like.

How to find a job. How to apply for a job. Why some people get jobs and others do not. Keeping a job. Training for a job that you are interested in which will fit you for immediate employment upon finishing school—with an employment service which can give you reasonable assurance of obtaining such a job. Finding out what different kinds of work you like; what the chances are in them; what the pay is apt to be, etc.<sup>21</sup>

To make certain that the needs of the students were revealed, they were also asked to check a large number of topics which presumably would fall under the various courses proposed.

More than two thousand usable replies were received from high-school students in several geographical localities. The following are some of the most important conclusions that were reached: (1) The area of greatest concern to the total group was vocational choice and placement; (2) help in the development of social abilities, relationships with the opposite sex, health problems, philosophy of life, problems of finance, learning to play an instrument, reading for enjoyment, and science topics (boys) all received high rankings; (3) religion, current problems, government and history, learning a foreign language and problems involving moral standards received relatively low rankings. The study is significant as an illustration of a procedure for studying adolescents. It does not throw much light upon the wider problems of guidance and curriculum making because it excluded from consideration needs that are not immediately felt by the student.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129.

Commission on Human Relations study Through case studies, interviews, and controlled observations and responses of youth to suggested problems, the Commission on Human Relations of the Progressive Education Association<sup>22</sup> formulated the following list:

TYPICAL POINTS OF FOCUS OR CONCERNS OF ADOLESCENTS

A. *Establishing Personal Relationships*

1. With Own Sex
2. With Other Sex
3. Concerns about Fundamental or Superficial Mores
4. Yearning for Understanding Friendships
5. Confusions Arising from Different Standards in Society
6. Interference of Process of Weaning from Family in Establishing New Personal Relationships
7. Concern over Change of Self in Different Personal Situations
8. Problems in Achieving Successful Marriage

B. *Establishing Independence*

1. Father or Mother Domination—"Authority"
2. Desire to Work
3. Compulsory Work to Support Others
4. Desire to Leave Home
5. Emotional Break with Dependence on Family
6. Acceptance on Adult Level
7. Freedom of Choice in Vital Decisions
8. Setting Up Beliefs about "Creed" as Authority
9. Establishing Allegiance as Part of Independence

C. *Understanding Human Behavior*

1. Concern over Ways People Dominate and Hurt Each Other
2. Concern over Frailties of Justice—Miscarriages—Bias
3. Man's Inhumanity to Man
4. General Discord Between People

D. *Establishing Self in Society*

1. Desire for Acceptance as Socially and Morally Responsible Person
2. Desire for Acceptance of Opinions as Important by Adults and Others
3. Desire to Feel Important to Society or Group
4. Readiness for Assumption of Job with No Opportunity

<sup>22</sup> Reported in H. H. Giles, S. P. McCutchen, and A. N. Zechiel, *Exploring the Curriculum*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1942. Alice Keliher was chairman of this commission, and worked closely with the PEA Commission on the Secondary-School Curriculum.

5. Readiness for Assumption of Home and Family Responsibilities
6. Concern Over Acceptance of Family Status by Social Group
7. Desire to Excel in Some Skill
8. Concern Over Status of Race or Minority Group
9. Efforts to Resolve Conflicts Arising from Differences in Mores in Groups within Society
10. Education

E. *Normality*

1. Physical Growth
2. Mental Ability
3. Emotions

F. *Understanding the Universe*

1. Sensitivity to Beauty
2. Concern over "Authorities" Outside of Experience
3. Urge to Create as Effort to Comprehend and Express
4. Effort to Establish Security in World and Universe Not Understood
5. Effort to Establish Philosophy of Life<sup>23</sup>

This formulation undoubtedly reflects more the "immediate and felt" aspect of needs, and less the socioeconomic aspect. In light of the data, namely, the responses of young people to problems presented to them, this is to be expected.

Educational Policies Commission—Imperative Needs of Youth In quite a different key is the statement of the Educational Policies Commission, entitled the *Imperative Needs of Youth*.<sup>24</sup>

1. All youth need to develop salable skills and those understandings and attitudes that make the worker an intelligent and productive participant in economic life. To this end, most youth need supervised work experience as well as education in the skills and knowledge of their occupations.
2. All youth need to develop and maintain good health and physical fitness.
3. All youth need to understand the rights and duties of the citizen of a democratic society, and to be diligent and competent in the performance of their obligations as members of the community and citizens of the state and nation.
4. All youth need to understand the significance of the family for the

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 315-320, *passim*.

<sup>24</sup> *Education for All American Youth: A Further Look*, Washington, Educational Policies Commission, 1952. This is a revision of the earlier *Education for All American Youth* published in 1944.

individual and society and the conditions conducive to successful family life.

5. All youth need to know how to purchase and use goods and services intelligently, understanding both the values received by the consumer and the economic consequences of their acts.
6. All youth need to understand the methods of science, the influence of science on human life, and the main scientific facts concerning the nature of the world and of man.
7. All youth need opportunities to develop their capacities to appreciate beauty in literature, art, music, and nature.
8. All youth need to be able to use their leisure time well and to budget it wisely, balancing activities that yield satisfactions to the individual with those that are socially useful.
9. All youth need to develop respect for other persons, to grow in their insight into ethical values and principles, and to be able to live and work cooperatively with others.
10. All youth need to grow in their ability to think rationally, to express their thoughts clearly, and to read and listen with understanding.<sup>25</sup>

Obviously this formulation differs materially from the lists of needs presented thus far. It is undoubtedly influenced by the "social demands" rather than the "psychobiological" concept. The term needs, as used here, simply refers to what the group that formulated the statement *thought* that youth *ought* to do, and what therefore should be made the basis of the high-school curriculum.

## THE DEVELOPMENTAL-TASK CONCEPT

The historical background of this important concept is related by Havighurst,<sup>26</sup> to whom most of the credit must be given for developing and providing a rationale for the *developmental-task* idea.<sup>27</sup>

The development of the concept seems to have been influenced by the difficulties and confusions arising from the controversy over the *adolescent-needs* concept which arose during the study of the Commission on the Secondary School Curriculum of the Progressive Education Association (1932-1940) referred to in the previous section of this chapter.

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<sup>26</sup> Robert J. Havighurst, *Human Development and Education*, New York, Longmans, Green, and Co., 1953.

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Havighurst worked very closely with this and related groups and has this to say about the events which led to the formulation of the new concept:

The Progressive Education Association's Commission on Secondary School Curriculum had led off with a statement of the purpose of general education as "to meet the needs of individuals . . . in such ways as to promote the fullest possible realization of personal potentialities and the most effective participation in a democratic society." Some thought this statement too child-centered, too much open to the interpretation that education was to take its directions from the whims of children, in spite of the PEA Commission's definition of a "need" as "personal-social" in character, rising out of the interaction of the individual and his society. Professor Boyd Bode abandoned his membership on the Commission and blasted the "needs approach" in an article in the *Journal of Progressive Education*.<sup>28</sup>

Havighurst, in the preface to the original pamphlet<sup>29</sup> dealing with this concept explains it in this manner:

The developmental task concept occupies the middle ground between the two opposed theories of education: the theory of freedom—that the child will develop best if left as free as possible, and the theory of restraint—that the child must learn to become a worthy responsible adult through restraints imposed by his society. A developmental task is midway between an individual need and a societal demand. It partakes of the nature of both. Accordingly, it is a useful concept for students who would relate human behavior to the problems of education—useful without, I hope, obscuring important issues in educational theory.<sup>30</sup>

A more precise definition of the concept is given in his later book, *Human Development and Education*, as follows:

The tasks the individual must learn—the developmental tasks of life—are those things that constitute healthy and satisfactory growth in our society. They are the things a person must learn if he is to be judged and to judge

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himself to be a reasonably happy and successful person. A developmental task is a task which arises at or about a certain period in the life of the individual, successful achievement of which leads to his happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by the society, and difficulty with later tasks.<sup>31</sup>

These tasks arise from the interaction of the individual and the surrounding environment. More specifically they grow out of the following sources: "Physical maturation," "the pressure of cultural processes," and the "desires, aspirations, and values of the emerging personality", and the author adds significantly: "They arise in most cases from combinations of these factors acting together."<sup>32</sup>

With characteristic thoroughness, Havighurst analyzes the developmental tasks from infancy to adulthood to old age—from "cradle to grave," as it were. At each level, he defines the tasks, explains the nature, biological and sociological, and cultural bases of each, the way they are related to lower, middle, and upper class American culture, what constitutes high, medium, and low behavior outcomes, and implications for the curriculum.

In the discussion which follows we shall list only the developmental tasks of adolescence and the nature of each task as stated by the author.<sup>33</sup>

#### THE ADOLESCENT PEER GROUP

1. Achieving New and More Mature Relations with Agemates of Both Sexes.

*Nature of the Task.* The goal: to learn to look upon girls as women and boys as men; to become an adult among adults; to learn to work with others for a common purpose, disregarding personal feelings; to learn to lead without dominating. (p. 111)

2. Achieving a Masculine or Feminine Role.

*Nature of the Task* [the goal]: To accept and to learn a socially approved adult masculine or feminine social role. (p. 115)

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE

3. Accepting One's Physique and Using the Body Effectively.

*Nature of the Task.* The goal: to become proud, or at least tolerant, of one's body; to use and protect one's body effectively and with personal satisfaction. (p. 120)

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5. The successful accomplishment of these tasks constitutes the goal of education.

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## 4. Achieving Emotional Independence of Parents and Other Adults.

*Nature of the Task.* The goal: to become free from childish dependence on parents; to develop affection for parents without dependence upon them; to develop respect for other adults without dependence upon them. (p. 123)

## 5. Achieving Assurance of Economic Independence.

*Nature of the Task.* The goal: to feel able to make a living, if necessary. This is primarily a task for boys, in our society, but it is of increasing importance to girls. (p. 127)

## 6. Selecting and Preparing for an Occupation.

*Nature of the Task.* The goal: to choose an occupation for which one has the necessary ability; to prepare for this occupation. (p. 128)

## 7. Preparing for Marriage and Family Life.

*Nature of the Task.* The goal: to develop a positive attitude toward family life and having children and (mainly for girls) to get the knowledge necessary for home management and child rearing. (p. 133)

## 8. Developing Intellectual Skills and Concepts Necessary for Competence.

*Nature of the Task.* The goal: to develop concepts of law, government, economics, politics, geography, human nature, and social institutions which fit the modern world; to develop language skills and reasoning ability necessary for dealing effectively with the problems of a modern democracy. (p. 136)

## DEVELOPING A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

## 9. Desiring and Achieving Socially Responsible Behavior.

*Nature of the Task.* The goal: to participate as a responsible adult in the life of the community, region, and nation; to take account of the values of society in one's personal behavior. (p. 142)

## 10. Acquiring a Set of Values and an Ethical System as a Guide to Behavior.

*Nature of the Task.* The goal: to form a set of values that are possible of realization; to develop a conscious purpose of realizing these values; to define man's place in the physical world and in relation to other human beings; to keep one's world picture and one's values in harmony with each other. *Definition:* a value is an object or state of affairs which is desired. (p. 147).<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup>The reader may wish to examine a somewhat similar statement of developmental tasks, which undoubtedly influenced Havighurst's formulation, in: *Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*, 1950 Yearbook, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development of the National Education Association, Washington, As-

The responsibility for helping the adolescent to achieve the goals set by the developmental tasks rests, of course, with several agencies and institutions of the culture. The chief of these institutions is the school. Havighurst points out that the modern school curriculum goes beyond that of the "old-time school which taught the 3 R's . . . and helps children with a variety of their developmental tasks." This it does through learning experiences in the following areas:

*Knowledge of the Social World.* The history and present facts of government, trade, industry, agriculture, population, the family, religion, nations, world interdependence, inter-group relations, vocations, occupational trends, etc.

*Knowledge of the Physical World.* The origin and development of the physical universe, the structure of matter, geography, weather, the nature of animal and plant life, the evolution of life, technology, etc.

*Knowledge of Self.* The body and its machinery, how the human being grows, diet, disease prevention, emotions and their relations to behavior, sex, and reproduction.

*Ethical Appreciation.* Music, art, architecture, literature, drama.

*Ethical Values.* The nature and values of democracy, the ethical systems of the world's great religions, the ethical aspects of everyday behavior in school and community.

*Physical Skills.* The skills necessary for competence in ordinary games. The skills of homemaking. Vocational skills.<sup>35</sup>

The design and organization of the curriculum best suited for the performance of its function would, of course, be determined by the curriculum-development group. As was pointed out, adolescents will be helped in achieving certain of their tasks by other agencies. However, Havighurst asserts that "a good school program is one that makes a maximum contribution to the performance by children of their developmental tasks," and suggests that in evaluating the program of a particular school, we might ask the following questions:

1. Does the school know where each child stands in his achievement of his developmental tasks? And does the school assist each child where his need is greatest?

sociation for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1950. Chapters VI and VII were prepared by Caroline Tryon and Jesse W. Lienthal, III, both of whom worked closely with Havighurst at the University of Chicago.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

2. Does the school have a clear policy and program for assisting children especially with certain developmental tasks, based on discussions with parents, churches, and youth-serving organizations, while these institutions take more responsibility for assisting with other tasks?
3. Does the school understand the strengths and weaknesses of other community institutions in assisting children with their developmental tasks, and does it aim to help where help is most needed?
4. Do the teachers and other school personnel exert an effective informal influence by their examples as people and through their relationships with children so as to help children with their developmental tasks?
5. Does the school definitely and systematically teach reflective thinking in the performance of developmental tasks?<sup>36</sup>

The developmental-task concept as sketched briefly above certainly provides considerable assistance to the curriculum maker. It takes into account both the psychobiological nature of the adolescent and the values and ideals of the culture. Perhaps it could be said, without detracting from its value, that it tends to fit the adolescent into a prescribed mold and thus may contribute to conformity with adult standards, without due respect for the need for self-definition. In other words, the proponents of this concept, in seeking to avoid the extreme individual-centered approach, seem perhaps to have moved too far in the direction of satisfying societal demands.

## THE ADOLESCENT-PROBLEMS CONCEPT

Up to this point it must be evident to the reader that there is considerable confusion of terminology in trying to understand and interpret adolescent behavior. Even at the risk of adding to this confusion, it seems necessary to discuss the problems approach as a basis for understanding youth. For the same reason that Havighurst abandoned the term "need" in favor of "developmental task," many people are turning to the terms "problem" or "problem areas," to identify behavior and to serve as a basis for the curriculum.

A number of checklists have been devised to get at the concerns, worries, or problems of youth. These checklists<sup>37</sup> are usually made up of problems expressed by youth in various contexts. Clearly this is one way

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 175-176.

<sup>37</sup> See Chapter VIII for an analysis of the *Mooney Problems Checklist* and the *Science Research Associates' Youth Inventory*.

of getting at the tensions, disturbances, or maladjustments which are sufficiently well defined by youth to be expressed.

An interesting illustration of the results of such studies is that of Remmers and Radler.<sup>38</sup> By means of checklists Remmers and his group at Purdue have conducted more than 50 polls of young people's problems, interests and desires since 1941. Some of the investigators' conclusions are these:

*The most significant place to start our examination of the results of these polls is to look at what U.S. teenagers list as their most common problems . . . At the head of the list is the wistful plea: "Want people to like me more." And most of the things that 25 per cent or more of the teenagers list as problems express, in one form or another, the same sentiment. A majority of teenagers want to gain or lose weight or otherwise improve their appearance. They want more dates, more friends, more popularity; they get stage fright before a group, worry about their lack of self-confidence. Their overriding concern emerges again when they are asked direct questions about their feelings with respect to approval by others. More than half admit that they try very hard to do everything that will please their friends; 38 per cent declare that the worst of all calamities is to be considered an "oddball." <sup>39</sup>*

The investigators seem to be in agreement with Friendenberg<sup>40</sup> that the adolescent, as such, is "vanishing," for they assert that the data gathered in seventeen years of polling indicate that this desire for popularity translates itself into "an almost universal tendency to conformity." In support of this striking conclusion, they present the following evidence:

More than half of our teenagers believe that censorship of books, magazines, newspapers, radio and television is all right. More than half believe that the Federal Bureau of Investigation and local police should be allowed to use wiretapping at will, that the police should be permitted to use the "third degree," that people who refuse to testify against themselves should be forced to do so. About half of our teenagers assert that most people aren't capable of deciding what's best for themselves; fully 75 per cent declare that obedience and respect for authority are the most important habits for children to learn. On practically all questions of social policy the youngsters lean strongly to stereotyped views. . . . Fewer than half claim that they think

<sup>38</sup> H. H. Remmers and D. H. Radler, "Teenage Attitudes," *Scientific American*, CHC, 25-29 (June, 1958).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>40</sup> *Op. cit.*

things out for themselves and act on their own decisions. Only one-fourth report that they often disagree with the group's opinion. No more than 18 per cent are willing to say that their tastes are quite different from those of their friends. Yet, in spite of these admissions most teenagers declare that their freedom is not too limited.<sup>41</sup>

This study certainly presents some important generalizations about teenagers which need to be taken into consideration by guidance counsellors and curriculum makers, but it hardly provides the data upon which a complete curriculum can be built. It could, however, be valuable if utilized to indicate flexible starting points for learning and for assessing the success of the educational enterprise.

Another study of this same general character by Harris<sup>42</sup> utilized a checklist to determine the changes in personal problems and interests of adolescents that took place between 1935 and 1957. The identical list of problems and instructions utilized in a study by P. M. Symonds (1936) was used. Both investigators accepted the same hypothesis: "Change the social and economic structure of society and you immediately change the relative emphasis of these [the adolescents'] problems and interests." Symonds' study involved 1,641 junior and senior high-school students in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and New York City. The repeat study by Harris involved 1,165 junior and senior high-school students in an unidentified Minnesota community. In both studies, students were asked to check problems and interests of *greatest*, *intermediate*, and *least* concern to them. The list of 15 problems dealt with the following topics: (1) Health, (2) Sex Adjustments, (3) Safety, (4) Money, (5) Mental Hygiene, (6) Study Habits, (7) Recreation, (8) Personal and Moral Qualities, (9) Home and Family Relationships, (10) Manners and Courtesy, (11) Personal Attractiveness, (12) Daily Schedule, (13) Civic Interests, Attitudes and Responsibilities, (14) Getting Along with Other People, and (15) Philosophy of Life.<sup>43</sup>

The investigator sought to make a comparison between 1935 and 1957 by relative ranks on the significance of the 15 problems. The results

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27. In a sense, these conclusions support the recent polls of college students which tend to show that they are more conservative than the general population. Until more evidence is available, judgment on this point should be suspended.

<sup>42</sup> Dale B. Harris, "Sex Differences in the Life Problems and Interests of Adolescents, 1935-1957," *Child Development*, XXX, 453-459 (December, 1959).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 455. Each of these "personal problems" was accompanied by a brief explanation.

were then classified in three orders of concern: *high, intermediate, and low*. The comparison was made by the use of a rather complicated statistical design which in the interest of brevity is omitted here. The overall conclusion of both studies seemed to indicate that boys and girls do not differ significantly in the ranking of their concerns.

In general, the conclusions do not seem to support unequivocally the original hypothesis, even though marked changes have taken place in the culture. Problems involving *money, personal and moral qualities, philosophy of life, and study habits* continue to be of highest significance, the last ranking considerably higher as a problem. *Physical health* seems to be less significant than in 1935, while *mental hygiene* rose in importance. Generally speaking, *home and family relationships* ranked somewhat higher as a problem with girls but lower with boys. *Attractiveness, civic interests, manners and courtesy* continued to be of intermediate concern to both boys and girls. Students indicated somewhat more interest in the problem of *getting along with other people*, but even so, it remained as of only intermediate significance. This conclusion seems to be somewhat at variance with the conclusion of the Remmers and Radler study reported above which placed a similar item at the top of the list. *Sex adjustments* ("love and marriage") ranked low as a problem in both studies, but rose to the intermediate level as an interest in the 1957 study. Surprisingly enough, recreation declined as a problem between 1936 and 1957, though it rose markedly as an interest to boys. *Safety and daily schedule* continued to be of low significance to both sexes, as problems and interests.

The investigator concludes the study with these observations:

The shifts . . . for the most part confirm what observers of recent social trends have noted. Today, youth marry younger and show an earlier interest in social relations, love and marriage. Our culture appears to recognize more openly now than two decades ago the sex, love, and marriage problems of young people. Physical health is actually less a problem today, and possibly receives less attention in school and in the popular press, whereas mental health discussions, literature and posters appear in every newspaper, magazine, and waiting room. An increase in informality and casualness in dress and behavior may reflect itself in the decline in concern with manners.

The student of adolescent behavior will not be surprised at the significance of money as a problem, high interest in recreation, lack of concern with and interest in safety, unconcern over daily schedule and civic affairs, considerable concern over study habits as a problem but lack of interest in the topic, nor will he be surprised by the greater interest of girls than boys



in attractiveness, love and marriage, mental health and philosophy and beliefs: of boys than girls in money, health, and recreation.

If adults wish to "view with alarm," they may regard the adolescent's relative unconcern with safety and hazard, set over against the teenage driving problem, and the young person's continued unconcern with civic affairs, set over against the continued increased emphasis on "modern problems" and citizenship in the secondary schools curriculum theory and effort.<sup>44</sup>

The problems and interests of adolescents analyzed in the two studies reported above might well be referred to as psychobiological needs as seen by the adolescent himself. Likewise, if Johnny says he has a problem in earning enough spending money, he is indicating the recognition of a developmental task such as "achieving economic independence" or a need "to develop salable skills," or the need "for emotional assurance of progress toward adult status." In other words, such a concern expressed by Johnny is a specific manifestation of behavior which is classifiable in a number of ways. Similarly, it would not be difficult to classify such commonly expressed concerns as: "puzzled about prayer," "being overweight," "wondering if I'll find a suitable mate," "wanting to leave home," and "needing a job during vacation," either under the categories of needs or developmental tasks.

But most educators recognize that young people—and older folk as well—may be quite unconscious of the meaning of their disturbances and therefore unable to express their concerns. Another recognized limitation is a reluctance on the part of many young people (and adults as well) to reveal their deeper concerns. The culture makes demands upon young people that cannot wait to be met until an immediate felt need is expressed. For this type of situation the term "problem" refers not to a felt need or difficulty, but to some condition or situation of which Johnny *should become* conscious. This difficulty bothered the Commission on the Secondary-School Curriculum and the term "need" was expanded to meet it. This gave rise to the personal-social interpretation as reported earlier in this chapter. Havighurst solved the same problem by substituting the term "*developmental task*." The reader will have to decide which terminology is most satisfactory for his purpose.

The term "problem area" is coming into fairly general use.<sup>45</sup> It is

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 458-459.

<sup>45</sup> See Chapter VI for problem areas employed in core programs and Chapter VIII for techniques utilized in determining problem areas.

used to designate a broad category around which a large number of the problems of adolescents cluster. Thus a problem area entitled *Problems of Home Living* would include a long list of possible problems which youngsters face in relation to their home environment.

Perhaps the best study of the problem areas appropriate to adolescents in a program of general education is reported by Marani.<sup>46</sup> She applied her technique to a random sampling of approximately 240 junior and senior high-school students in Sarasota, Florida.

As a basis for securing and classifying the data, the investigator formulated the following framework:

BASIC AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS IN ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

1. Gaining maturity in meeting personal problems
2. Achieving a more independent and responsible status in home and family relationships
3. Developing successful and maturing relationships with other adolescents
4. Developing new and successful relationships with adults
5. Achieving satisfactory and appropriate school experiences
6. Assuming increased participation and responsibility in community activities
7. Developing competent participation and security in economic relationships
8. Gaining understanding in meeting intergroup and intercultural relationships
9. Developing a mature system of values<sup>47</sup>

The data were then reclassified into problem areas suitable for a program of general education in the high school. The following is a very condensed report of her findings:

<sup>46</sup> Jean Victoria Marani, *A Technique for Determining Problem Areas for General Education in the Secondary School*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1958. See Chapter VIII for a description of the techniques which the investigator utilized in getting at, not only the immediate felt and expressed needs of adolescents, but also the needs and problems as seen by parents, teachers, and social scientists.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 162-163. These categories were used to define the responsibilities and relationships commonly faced by adolescents as they assume adult citizenship status.

PROBLEM AREAS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL<sup>48</sup>

1. **SELF-UNDERSTANDING** The focal points of adolescent concerns in this area are: (a) achieving a sense of responsibility, (b) accepting the obligations and privileges of adulthood, (c) understanding the forces which mold personality, (d) developing desirable characteristics of maturity, (e) understanding the relationships of self to peers and adults, (f) developing a wide range of interests, (g) achieving a sense of personal satisfaction in leisure activities, (h) learning to select worthwhile leisure interests, (i) learning to make wise decisions, (j) developing personal values and standards of conduct, (k) achieving self-respect and a sense of personal worth, (l) gaining a sense of security in meeting new situations.
2. **HEALTHFUL LIVING** The focal points of adolescent concerns in this area are: (a) understanding and accepting bodily change, (b) learning to care for and improve personal appearance, (c) developing appropriate health and nutritional habits, (d) accepting physical handicaps in self and others, (e) recognizing the relationships between personal health and the health of others, (f) understanding the relationship of health to success in schools, employment, and social life, (g) learning to deal with problems of mental health, (h) accepting a personal share in solving community health problems, (i) achieving a healthful balance between work and play, (j) learning to evaluate advertisements pertaining to health and personal appearance, (k) learning to seek reliable advice in health matters.
3. **HOME AND FAMILY LIVING** The focal points of adolescent concerns in this area are: (a) recognizing and respecting the rights and privileges of family members, (b) cooperating in making family decisions, (c) recognizing the need for family recreation, (d) developing a more mature understanding of parental standards of conduct, (e) assuming a share in home responsibilities, (f) adjusting to family's financial resources, (g) developing a more independent status within the family, (h) respecting the values of family life, (i) experiencing security in one's family situation, (j) understanding the role of family life in our society, (k) learning to accept one's family in relation to the families of peers, (l) contributing actively toward strengthening the family unit, (m) recognizing the responsibilities of marriage and family life, (n) discovering the characteristics of personality which make for a happy marriage.
4. **PERSONAL-SOCIAL RELATIONS** The focal points of adolescent concerns

\* All of these areas were found to be appropriate for both junior and senior high-school students, but the data indicate that **LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY** appears to be more appropriate for junior high-school students while **FINDING VALUES BY WHICH TO LIVE** is deemed more appropriate for senior high-school students.

in this area are: (a) achieving satisfactory relationships with the opposite sex, (b) gaining understanding of the obligations of marriage, (c) learning to select a marriage partner, (d) choosing friends wisely, (e) understanding and respecting adults, (f) maintaining standards in the face of group pressures, (g) understanding the significance of popularity, (h) recognizing the responsibilities and obligations of friendships, (i) learning the responsibilities of group participation, (j) achieving maturity in meeting interpersonal relationships, (k) maintaining individualism in a group-centered society, (l) understanding and accepting the personal strengths and weaknesses of others, (m) developing socially acceptable behavior, (n) understanding the pattern of relationships between adults and adolescents in our society, (o) meeting intergroup and intercultural situations with tact and tolerance.

5. **EDUCATION AND SCHOOL LIVING** The focal points of adolescent concerns in this area are: (a) evaluating personal talents and abilities, (b) learning how to study, (c) selecting appropriate subjects, (d) adjusting to interpersonal relations with classmates and teachers, (e) developing a wholesome attitude toward success in school, (f) choosing school activities wisely, (g) recognizing the values of education, (i) planning for college, (j) planning for military service, (k) cooperating in community efforts to improve schools, (l) recognizing that education is continuous, (m) understanding the school's obligations to meet individual differences, (n) forming an intelligent opinion of what constitutes good education, (o) recognizing the basic premises separating various educational systems at home and abroad, (p) examining the responsibility of the school to alter its program in response to pressure groups.
6. **VOCATIONAL PREPARATION** The focal points of adolescent concerns in this area are: (a) learning to evaluate personal talents and abilities, (b) investigating a wide variety of careers, (c) evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of preferred vocations, (d) determining the preparation required for a specific career or vocation, (e) experiencing a feeling of security in a vocational choice, (f) recognizing the responsibilities of employee and employer, (g) recognizing the real satisfactions of employment, (h) planning military service in relation to vocational preparation, (i) recognizing that there are no "soft" jobs, (j) considering the expense required to prepare for a preferred vocation, (k) evaluating parental and societal demands of entering a particular vocation.
7. **LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY** The focal points of adolescent concerns in this area are: (a) finding appropriate teenage recreation, (b) taking an interested part in community projects, (c) cooperating with adults in civic activities, (d) helping to create a good neighborhood, (e) recognizing the social forces shaping community life, (f) developing ways of preventing juvenile delinquency, (g) planning to meet the needs of growing communities, (h) understanding the political and financial responsibilities

adolescent has been described as a "marginal man." As he seeks "self-definition" and an independent status, he is confronted with obstacles in the culture which lead to anxiety and to ambivalent behavior, sometimes to serious maladjustment. He is frequently not understood by parents and by the school. The attempt to force adult standards upon him may result in rebellion—or in conformity. In either case, the problem of growing up is made more difficult.

3. Even though there seems to be a current trend in curriculum development toward placing organized subject matter above any concern for the present needs, problems, and interests of the adolescent, all evidence points to the necessity for continued study of this important period as a basis for curriculum development.

4. No study of adolescent behavior is complete that does not take into account the expressed wishes, wants, desires, and motivations of the individual, as well as the culture of which the adolescent is a part. If the individual is studied apart from his culture the result is likely to place undue stress upon the transient, the immediate, the superficial expression of the present feelings, anxieties, concerns, and the like, that at the moment seem significant to the learner. On the other hand, if we build learning experiences on the basis of what adults *think* adolescents should be and do, and upon what it is psychologically possible to teach them at a given maturity level, we are ignoring vital principles of learning.

5. The problem of how to provide a curriculum that gives due recognition to the present living of the student and the demands of adult society presents an ever-present challenge to the school. It is not likely that the problem will "go away" simply by being ignored.

6. If we are to preserve the integrity of the individual, we shall need to work hard to combat the trends toward national standards supported by objective testing programs; toward materials of instruction programmed on a national basis and fed into machines for mastery by the student; and toward the attempt to secure "quality" merely by exacting greater mastery of logical systems of knowledge by means of extrinsic motivation.

7. If we are to continue to support the ideal of education for all adolescent youth, we shall need also to combat the present trend toward placing greater emphasis upon the so-called academic disciplines at the expense of the programs designed more specifically to help the non-college bound student gain economic independence.

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#### SELECTED AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS\*—PART I

##### FILMS (All are 16mm sound)

ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT SERIES. (Eight b&w films and five silent filmstrips), McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., Text-Film Dept., 330 W. 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.

1. Age of Turmoil, 20 min. (follow-up filmstrip)
  2. Discipline During Adolescence, 16 min.
  3. Emotional Maturity, 20 min.
  4. Meaning of Adolescence, 16 min. (follow-up filmstrip)
  5. Meeting the Needs of Adolescents, 19 min. (follow-up filmstrip)
  6. Physical Aspects of Puberty, 19 min. (follow-up filmstrip)
  7. Social Acceptability, 20 min.
  8. Social-Sex Attitudes in Adolescence, 22 min. (follow-up filmstrip)
- Dramatization of the problems, interests, and activities of young people

\* Audio-visual materials for Parts I, II, III, compiled by Hazel L. Gibbony, Supervisor, Curriculum Materials Center, The Ohio State University.

during various stages of adolescence, as an effective means of gaining better understandings of the adolescent.

**DEFINING DEMOCRACY.** 18 min., b&w, Encyclopedia Britannica Films, 1150 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Illinois.

Combined version of two former films, illustrating conditions in a community which tend toward democracy or despotism.

**DESIGN OF AMERICAN PUBLIC EDUCATION.** 14 min., b&w, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., Text-Film Dept. 330 W. 42nd Street, New York, N. Y. A follow-up filmstrip also available.

An "assembly line" educational process is contrasted with a genuinely democratic, decentralized, locally elected educational system that tailors its curriculum to community needs.

**EDUCATION FOR WHAT?** 30 min., b&w, NET (National Educational Television) Film Service, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Teenagers discuss the objectives and faults of American education. Comments on place of bright student, freedom of choice, size of schools, subject matter emphasis, and how well education challenges the student. WOR-TV kinescope.

**EDUCATION: WHAT'S WRONG WITH AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS?** 30 min., b&w, NET (National Educational Television) Film Service, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Teenagers from France, Ghana, India, and Israel discuss the pros and cons of American education and question whether or not it is challenging. WOR-TV Kinescope.

**EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERIES.** (Five b&w films and five silent filmstrips), McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., Text-Film Dept., 330 W. 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.

1. Importance of Goals, 19 min.
2. Motivating the Class, 19 min.
3. Individual Differences, 23 min.
4. Problem of Pupil Adjustment, Part I, "The Drop-Out: A Case Study," 19 min.
5. Problem of Pupil Adjustment, Part II, "The Stay-In: A School Study," 19 min.

**HOW WE LEARN.** 10 min., b&w, Coronet Films, Coronet Building, Chicago 1, Illinois.

Analyzes the process of learning and shows the two components: "readiness" and "materials."

**PROMOTING PUPIL ADJUSTMENT.** 20 min., b&w, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., Text-Film Dept., 330 W. 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.



Social and emotional growth of pupils should be as important to secondary school teachers as their intellectual progress. Shows a basic approach to the problems of pupil adjustment to school life and learning.

**SATELLITES, SCHOOLS AND SURVIVAL.** 29 min., b&w, National Education Association, Public Relations, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

Space-age education problems discussed by five nationally-known figures, showing the necessary relationship of the American system of education to survival as a free nation.

**SOCIAL CLASS IN AMERICA.** 16 min., b&w, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., Text-Film Dept., 330 W. 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.

Shows factors that determine social class acting from birth to maturity upon the lives of three boys representing lower, middle, and upper class respectively.

### FILMSTRIPS

**DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE.** 115 frames, color, 12-inch 33½ rpm record, script. Dept. of Elementary School Principals, NEA, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

Presentation of backgrounds for planning instructional programs in the elementary school, but equally applicable to the secondary level. Highlights major forces shaping our future society.

**YOUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY—DOES IT MATTER?** 40 frames, b&w, silent, discussion guide. Audio-Visual Materials Consultation Bureau, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

Provides illustrations, as a basis for group discussion of two different educational philosophies in action in the classroom and gives tangible ways in which to measure and develop a personal educational philosophy.

### RECORDINGS

**EDUCATIONAL GROWTH SERIES.** Microgroove, 33½ rpm. Educational Recording Services, 5922 Abernathy Drive, Los Angeles 45, California.

A series of forty-one 36–44 minute discussions by educators on a variety of topics, all more or less applicable to teacher education programs. The following titles are particularly applicable to the material discussed in Part I of this volume:

Order Number

216. *The High School Curriculum for Life Adjustment*, Harl R. Douglas.

217. *Personality Development in the Classroom*, Louis P. Thorpe.

233. *A Reply to the Attacks on Our Schools*, Louis Kaplan.
234. *The Citizen Child, His Needs in a Free World*, Mrs. John E. Hayes and Mrs. Newton P. Leonard.
237. *Understanding Education, Parents, and Self*, Myron S. Olson.
238. *Some National and International Educational Problems*, Earl J. McGrath.



# *Determining the Structure of the Curriculum*



THE ROLES OF DIRECT EXPERIENCE AND  
ORGANIZED SUBJECTS IN THE CURRICULUM



CURRICULUM DESIGNS FOR  
GENERAL EDUCATION



CURRICULUM DESIGNS FOR  
SPECIALIZED EDUCATION



PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING THE SCOPE  
AND SEQUENCE OF THE CURRICULUM

# 5

## *The Roles of Direct Experience and Organized Subjects in the Curriculum*



ALL OF THE activities that are provided for students by the school constitute its curriculum. It is by means of these activities that the school hopes to bring about changes in the behavior of students in terms of its philosophy and goals. It is therefore important that consideration be given to the *kind* and *organization* of learning activities which it provides. In doing this it must take into account the nature of the learner and the basic principles of effective learning. These foundations of the curriculum have been explored in previous chapters.

The purpose of this chapter is to make a critical appraisal of two contrasting positions regarding learning experiences which have had profound influence in shaping the scope and sequence of the curriculum. The first of these is the conception that direct personal experience should play the dominant role in the curriculum. The second is the time-honored conception that logical systems of knowledge should be the basis of the curriculum. It is especially important to examine critically these two concepts at this time because of the sharp criticisms that have been made against direct first-hand experiences by certain critics and a determination to "restore" logically organized race experience to its former high status and prestige.

First, we propose to take a look at the nature of direct experience and appraise its role in the learning process. Second, we shall present the case for vicarious experience in the form of logically organized fields of knowledge or subjects. Finally, we shall present some proposals for the

improvement of the subject-centered curriculum and a possible reconciliation of the two concepts.

## TWO KINDS OF EXPERIENCE

Experience, as Dewey pointed out many years ago, is a "weasel" word. To the man in the street it probably most frequently means participation in anything; the actual living through an event; "skill, facility, or functional knowledge gained through *personal* knowledge, feeling, or action." To the philosopher, experience may mean the sum total of all knowable reality, the fruits of which are best exemplified by logical systems of knowledge. It is this confusion that gets us into trouble when we attempt to examine and evaluate differing types of learning activities. Let's first look at *experiencing* as it takes place in the life of the individual in his total environment as well as in the more restricted environment of the school.

**Direct personal experience** From an educational standpoint, John Dewey has helped us to arrive at a fruitful notion of experience and to develop a working conception of it in relation to the school program. In a much-quoted and frequently misunderstood passage, he states:

The nature of experience can be understood only by noting that it includes an active and passive element peculiarly combined. On the active hand, experience is *trying*, a meaning which is explicit in the connected term experiment. On the passive, it is *undergoing*. When we experience something we act on it, we do something with it; then we suffer or undergo the consequences. We do something to the thing and then it does something to us in return; such is the peculiar combination. The connection between these two phases of experience measures the fruitfulness or value of the experience. Mere activity does not constitute experience. It is dispersive, centrifugal, dissipating. Experience as trying involves change but change is meaningless transition unless it is consciously connected with the return wave of consequences which flow from it. When an activity is continued *into* the undergoing of consequences, when the change made by action is reflected back into a change made in us, the mere flux is loaded with significance. We learn something. It is not experience when a child merely sticks his finger into a flame; it is experience when the movement is connected with the pain which he undergoes in consequence. Henceforth the sticking of the finger into the flame *means* a burn. Being burned is a mere physical change, like the burning of a stick of wood, if it is not perceived as a consequence of some other action.

Blind and capricious impulses hurry us on heedlessly from one thing to

another. So far as this happens, everything is writ in water. There is none of that cumulative growth which makes an experience in any vital sense of that term. On the other hand, many things happen to us in the way of pleasure or pain which we do not connect with any prior activity of our own. They are mere accidents so far as we are concerned. There is no before or after to such experience; no retrospect or outlook, and consequently no meaning. We get nothing which may be carried over to foresee what is likely to happen next, and no gain in ability to adjust ourselves to what is coming—no added control. Only by courtesy, can such an experience be called experience. To "learn from experience" is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence. Under such conditions doing becomes a trying; an experiment with the world to find out what it is like; the undergoing becomes instruction—discovery of the connection of things.<sup>1</sup>

Reduced to its simplest terms, then, experience starts with a dynamic interaction between the organism and the environment. The organism *acts* and the environment strikes back. When the interconnections are seen, we are said to have an experience. As in the case of the child and the flame, the interconnections are not hard to discover. The experience is a very simple one. But as action becomes more complicated and the environmental aspects become more complex, confusion results and interpretation becomes difficult. When interpretation involves the resolution of doubts or hypotheses by making further observation, by more *action*, we have "*reflective experience*," or *reflective thinking*. We then have a forked-road situation. Action is temporarily blocked. Out of previous experience or additional activity of one sort or another, inferences arise that are tested by further action. We say then that a reconstruction of experience has taken place. *Flame* comes to mean danger, warmth, beauty, and in a more technical sense, oxidation. New experiences with fire are interpreted in terms of the old. Flame becomes a thing that may burn or that may give enjoyment, depending upon the total situation. This is undoubtedly the highest type of learning, and man's superiority in this respect marks him off from the lower animals.

Illustrations of the direct personal experience approach Perhaps some illustrations may serve to clarify the concept of direct personal experience as opposed to race experience. To have experience playing golf means actual participation in the game, rather than reading *about* it in a book. It is the difference between "feeling" the club-head as it swings

<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, pp. 163-164. Copyright 1916 by The Macmillan Company, New York, used with their permission.

"through" the golf ball—or rather the arc in which the golf ball is located—and being told or reading *about* the proper stance, the arc of the swing, the proper grip, and the like. This is, of course, not to say that instruction is not helpful, but *instruction without a background of experience in actually playing the game, and the opportunity for continuous reinforcement of successful behavior* is likely to be relatively ineffective.

It was this emphasis upon active participation in on-going activities that was the basis of Dewey's famous laboratory school at the University of Chicago (1896-1904).<sup>2</sup> The school was organized as a form of community life in miniature, reproducing the fundamental activities such as those of the home, in order that the child might become familiar with the structure, modes of operation, and materials of the larger community and to enable him to express himself and thus gain control of his own powers. To this end, he and Mrs. Dewey organized the laboratory school, principally for their own and a few of their neighbors' children, designed in a measure to recapture the vitality and reality of living which was characteristic of life in America before the advent of the machine age. He explains this in one of his early "talks" to the parents as follows:

Those of us who are here today [1899] need go back only one, two or at most three generations, to find a time when the household was practically the center in which were carried on, or about which were clustered, all the typical forms of industrial occupation. The clothing worn was for the most part made in the house; the members of the household were usually familiar also with the shearing of the sheep, the carding and spinning of the wool, and the plying of the loom. Instead of pressing a button and flooding the house with electric light, the whole process of getting illumination was followed in its toilsome length from the killing of the animal and the trying of fat to the making of wicks and dipping of candles. The supply of flour, of lumber, of foods, of building materials, of household furniture, even of metal ware, of nails, hinges, hammers, etc., was produced in the immediate neighborhood, in shops which were constantly open to inspection and often centers of neighborhood congregation. The entire industrial process stood revealed, from the production on the farm of the raw material till the finished article was actually put to use. Not only this, but practically every member of the household had his own share of the work. The children as they gained in strength and capacity were gradually initiated into the mysteries of the several processes. It was a matter of immediate concern even

<sup>2</sup> See John Dewey, *The School and Society*, Revised Edition, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1915. Copyright 1900 and 1915 by John Dewey.

to the point of actual participation. . . . There was always something which really needed to be done, a real necessity that every member of the household should do his part faithfully and in cooperation with others. Personalities which became effective were bred and tested in the medium of action. . . . No number of object lessons, got up as object lessons for the sake of giving information, can afford even the shadow of a substitute for acquaintance with the plants and animals of the farm and garden acquired through actually living among them and caring for them. No training of sense organs in school, introduced for the sake of training, can begin to compete with the alertness and fulness of sense-life that comes through daily intimacy and interest in familiar occupations. Verbal memory can be trained in committing tasks, a certain discipline of the reasoning powers can be acquired through lessons in science and mathematics; but after all, this is somewhat remote and shadowy compared with the training of attention and of judgment that is acquired in having to do things with a real motive behind and a real outcome ahead.<sup>3</sup>

Dewey wasn't bemoaning the passing of the "good old days," for no one more clearly than he saw the benefits of science and technology, their application to the enrichment of living and, above all, to the improvement of education. What he really was trying to do was to capture the reality of the "good old days," and utilize the compensations of the new order—"the increase in toleration, in breadth of social judgment, the larger acquaintance with human nature, the sharpened alertness in reading signs of character and interpreting social situations, greater accuracy of adaptation to differing personalities, contact with greater commercial activities."<sup>4</sup>

The curriculum of the Chicago school was made up of some of the occupations of common life and industry. Young children were introduced into simple domestic and industrial activities. "Manual training," which had already been firmly established, was transformed into industrial arts. Nature study and simple experimentation were introduced. Much emphasis was placed upon the textile industries, through the use of the spinning wheel and the loom. Social studies were introduced, not as a "subject," but rather as a theme to show man's dependence on

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6-9, *passim*. Dewey acknowledges his indebtedness to Froebel, e.g., that the primary root of all educative activity is in the instructive, impulsive attitudes and activities of the child, and not in its presentation and application of external material. Likewise his advocacy of the school as a miniature society was undoubtedly influenced by Froebel.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.



nature and society. Blind effort, formal drill, and recitations had no place in the school. Discipline took the form of inner self-direction dominated by purpose and absorbing goals, instead of the coercion methods of discipline which were characteristic of the "listening" schools of the time. The on-going purposeful activities became the center for unifying the child's world. This point is made dramatically as Dewey sums up his "talk" on waste in education:

Thus I have attempted to indicate how the school may be connected with life so that the experience gained by the child in a familiar, commonplace way is carried over and made use of there, and what the child learns in the school is carried back and applied in everyday life, making the school an organic whole instead of a composite of isolated parts. The isolation of studies as well as of parts of the school system disappears. Experience has its geographical aspect, its artistic and literary, its scientific and its historical sides. All studies arise from aspects of the one earth and the one life lived upon it. We do not have a series of stratified earths, one of which is mathematical, another physical, another historical, and so on. We should not be able to live very long in any one taken by itself. We live in a world where all sides are bound together. All studies grow out of relations in the one great common world. When the child lives in varied but concrete and active relationship to this common world, his studies are naturally unified. The teacher will not have to resort to all sorts of devices to weave a little arithmetic into the history lesson, and the like. *Relate the school to life and all studies are of necessity correlated.*<sup>5</sup>

The school was in existence only eight years, which was too short a time to test completely the theories upon which it was based, but it was the forerunner of most of the experimental work which became known as progressive education.

The *project method*, which had its inception in agricultural education in 1911 and which was later extended and popularized by William Heard Kilpatrick and others, was the direct outgrowth of the theory of "learning through doing" which was basic to Dewey's program. A simple illustration of this from the field of agriculture will make the connection clear. In the logical system-of-knowledge approach prevalent before the revolution which began in 1911, a boy studies different types of soils, how to improve them through fertilization, drainage, etc.; he learns of the kind

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81. (Italics added.) Note that Dewey recognized clearly the place of "studies," even though some critics charge that he neglected systematic knowledge.

of soil best adapted to the growth of corn. He learns the different types of corn, their uses, yields, marketable value, the proper time for planting, the appropriate cultivation, the harvesting, the final marketing, and a host of other facts and information that all fit together into a logical system. At appropriate times, the teacher demonstrates or the student experiments in the laboratory. The textbook and the manual were the determiners of scope and sequence. Contrast this procedure with the actual raising of a field of corn by the student. He selects his plot of ground and his seed, and proceeds through the various stages until the corn is finally marketed. At various steps in the process he has to draw upon organized subject matter. He cannot even determine the proper soil without some help from race experience. The corn isn't growing properly. What is the matter? He consults subject matter pertaining to diseases, proper cultivation, proper nourishment, and the like, to find a solution for this problem. What is the essential difference between the two activities? In the first case, race experience in the form of organized subject matter is the center. Direct personal experience is drawn upon to illustrate and vitalize the subject matter that is logically presented. The hope is that it will function in future experience. In the other case, direct personal experience is antecedent to the use of organized knowledge. The experience has its own logic, its beginning and its end. Subject matter is taken from its place in the logical system into which it has been classified by the specialist and used to enrich and make meaningful the on-going activity. In the first illustration the boy has learned *about* raising corn, in the second he has *raised* corn and learning is instrumental to that end. The point which should be made is that logically organized subject matter and activity are present in both cases. This is why we have termed one kind of organization, *subject-centered*, and the other, *experience-centered*. Miseducation can result when subject matter is not connected with vital experience, but it can also result when vital personal experience is not connected with appropriate subject matter.

But even though we accept the above generalization, the problem still remains as to *which center* is best for organizing learning activities. Shall direct, personal experience be antecedent, concomitant, or subsequent to organized subject matter, and what shall be the principle of organization?

Some basic principles of experience-centered activities Before making a survey of the advantages and disadvantages of direct personal ex-

perience-centered activities, we can make the concept more explicit by suggesting certain principles that are pertinent.

1. *Learning (the acquisition of attitudes, knowledge, skills, abilities, and the like) is usually, if not always, instrumental to the achievement of some more or less tangible or concrete end or goal.* This principle was implicit in the previous illustration of a boy who set about raising an acre of corn, as contrasted with the boy who learned about raising corn from a textbook. In the first instance, the boy's primary purpose obviously was not to learn, but rather to accomplish a very concrete and tangible goal. He probably had in mind a certain yield which might be expected and more specifically the amount of money he should be able to clear on the project in terms of current market trends. The changes in behavior that resulted from his activities are more or less incidental to the activity. This doesn't mean that the learning is not important. Indeed, in the mind of the teacher, it is probably *the* most important result, for he is trying, through the experience, to bring about more and more control over his environment on the part of the student. That is, the teacher is trying to help the boy to reconstruct his experience. His success is measured by the learning products that result. The expectation is that more effective learning will result when the problem is approached in this manner. Otherwise, the teacher would use the more traditional method—the memorization of facts and principles. In many curricular activities, the principle is not as clear-cut as in the illustrations cited, but in essence it is applicable to most situations. Other examples are the following: (1) making a product chart of the New England region; (2) preparing a brief to convince the city council that it should build a swimming pool; (3) dramatizing the quarrel scene between Brutus and Cassius; (4) making a community survey; (5) making a school garden; (6) painting murals for the cafeteria; (7) publishing a school newspaper; (8) writing and presenting a school play; (9) beautifying the school grounds; (10) organizing a student council; (11) collecting scrap metals; (12) selling war savings stamps; (13) keeping accounts for the school lunchroom. Note that in all of these activities learning, as such, is instrumental to active, vital, personal experiencing, through which the student is motivated by a tangible goal.

2. *The present experience of the student, his problems and interests play a dominant role in the determination of appropriate activities and in planning, executing, and evaluating outcomes.* At the outset, it

should be made clear that all activities, whether they be experience or subject-matter centered, are most effective when the above principle prevails; but when the very nature of the activity depends upon its close relationship with the on-going life that is being lived by the student, the principle takes on new meanings. Extrinsic motivation in a Latin class may be gradually transformed into wholehearted interest in due time, but the direct-experience activity is doomed to failure from the start if the student is not activated by a strong motive for carrying it forward.



*Courtesy, Riverview High School Photo by John Galese*

Direct personal experience-centered activities utilize to the fullest extent the environment—both physical and social. Responsibility for caring for school property contributes to good citizenship.

An enrichment class in Ornamental Horticulture maintains landscape plants on the campus of the Riverview High School, Sarasota, Florida.

experience. Most experience-centered units of work utilize more rather than less organized subject matter than the traditional textbook assignment.

2. *Personal experience-centered activities utilize to the fullest extent the environment, both physical and social.* We shall see in the next chapter how the schools that are moving in the direction of the experience-centered programs stress community study and participation. This again seems to be a natural emphasis, when the school breaks with the academic tradition.

3. *Personal experience-centered activities are easily oriented to the development of democratic values.* Democracy is primarily a way of living. The group project, the unit planned cooperatively, the study of the community, all lend themselves admirably to the development of distinctively democratic values for it is in the processes of living that we see democracy at work and test its effectiveness.

4. *Personal experience-centered activities possess significant potentialities for unifying the school and the community.* When the community serves as a laboratory for the study of life problems, the community is brought nearer to the school. Many of the activities that the school provides require the active participation of the community. In this way, the objectives of school life and community life tend to merge. This does not mean that good school-community relationships are possible only in a school that stresses experience-centered activities. It *does* mean, however, that good relationships are stimulated and facilitated by such activities.

5. *Personal experience-centered activities promote the unification of the various aspects of school living.* It is axiomatic that to the extent the learning activities are broadened in terms of personal socio-economic problems, the teaching staff, the students, and the community are virtually "forced" into close cooperation. The word *force* is used advisedly. It does not mean external coercion, but rather the compulsion of the situation itself. Broad enterprises such as are a part of a program of experience-centered activities will not be successful unless all of the resources of the school, personal and material, are used economically and efficiently. Again, as students assume responsibility in helping to plan the major activities, the distinctions between the curricular and the extracurricular tend to disappear. The same kind and quality of intelligent participation that has characterized the work of the student council

at its best will also characterize the student's participation in the day-to-day life of the school.

6. *Personal experience-centered activities are consistent with the organismic psychology of learning.* Learning is an active process. It takes place best when the organism is confronted with genuine problems that require for their solution the use of the method of intelligence. *Experience-centered activities provide admirably the setting for this type of learning.* Again, the facing of situations that are part and parcel of the student's changing environment is the best guarantee of the transfer of training to new situations, provided that the teacher is alert to the possibilities of transfer. Furthermore, the unified character of the activities undertaken stimulates and facilitates the process of integration in the growth of the student.

#### ARGUMENTS AGAINST PERSONAL EXPERIENCE-CENTERED LEARNING

In spite of the fact that personal experience-centered activities seem to be consistent with the democratic philosophy and the newer psychology, such programs have not found ready acceptance in the high school on a large scale.

Since the inception of the "sputnik" era, critics have persistently attacked not only personal experience-directed activities as such, but also so-called practical courses which utilize "learning through doing" techniques. Such courses and activities are branded as "anti-intellectual," "soft," and as "training" rather than education. Most vociferous among the critics is the Council for Basic Education which has been referred to repeatedly in this volume. Almost every issue of the *Bulletin*<sup>2</sup> has something disparaging to say about direct experience activities or practical courses, usually under the caption: *Trivia of the Month*. A few random samples will indicate the flavor of the criticisms.

*Fido becomes a teaching resource.* This spring will see launched a national "Education Through Pets" program having for its objective the holding of Pet Fairs in Elementary Schools. . . . Says one of the educator sponsors: "Holding a Pet Fair offers many educational values. A Pet Fair is more than just a pet show. It gives students an opportunity to demonstrate

<sup>2</sup> Council for Basic Education, *Bulletin*, Mortimer Smith, editor, Washington, D. C., Council for Basic Education.

their abilities and handiwork in many subject areas, and gives teachers an opportunity to gain community recognition for their schools."<sup>8</sup>

A Minnesota high school, believing that young people should be prepared for their hobbies, is going to install a barbecue for the boys of the Home Economics class.

In an Illinois town 8th grade boys and girls must take a new course which includes grooming, personality development, basic foods, wood finishing, painting, and electricity.<sup>9</sup>

Along with many other schools, a Long Island high school offers a course in cooking for boys, but in addition also provides a course that instructs them in etiquette, table service, nutrition, use of silverware, "and how to order from a restaurant menu when on a date."

The following are only a few among the many courses a student can elect in a Rhode Island high school: Interior Decorating, Economics and You, Managing the Family Income, Family Relations, Oil Painting, College Art.<sup>10</sup>

And under the caption *Strength Through Joy* the editor pays his respects to outdoor education:

. . . The May issue of the highly influential *Bulletin* of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals devotes 150 pages to "Outdoor Education for American Youth" on the stated premise that "the school has a vital responsibility for equipping every boy and girl with these attitudes, knowledges, skills and appreciations which are so essential for lifetime enjoyment of the out-of-doors."

This is logical—if you assume that schools should teach, indiscriminately, anything teachable and conceivably interesting. But what schoolmen are urged to espouse is not an occasional classroom unit on building a beaver dam or broiling over charcoal. It is an elaborate outdoor program in which teaching *must* be done in the haunts of coot and hern, on the well-established and irrefutable principle of "learning by doing." Sex education, anyone?<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 5 (May, 1960).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 12 (June, 1958).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 9 (August, 1958).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Bulletin #12 (July, 1957), p. 15. For an interesting statement of position by three top leaders of the Council, see *School Management*, IV, 26-30; 65 (December, 1960). The views set forth are somewhat less dogmatic than many of the statements appearing in the bulletin, but the authors look with suspicion on vocational education, field trips, and the like, especially if they are taken in lieu of academic courses.

The views of the Council expressed in the above quotations are fairly typical of many critics of secondary education—especially those who represent the academic fields. Perhaps a brief discussion of the alleged weaknesses of personal experience-centered activities will be helpful in interpreting current criticisms of this approach.

1. *Some educators contend that facts and principles that are learned in the matrix of direct experience are not permanently retained or applied readily to new situations.* This is an argument against instrumental learning of all sorts.<sup>12</sup> There is probably an element of truth in this claim, provided that the teacher is not conscious of the necessity for helping the student to intellectualize his experience. It must be admitted that there is no automatic transfer, and that teachers are frequently guilty of assuming that there is transfer where none exists. A class may be engaging in a truly democratic activity. Many of the elements of the democratic process may be clearly obvious to the trained adult who is participating in or observing the situation. They may not be obvious at all to the group of students. The students may not really know what is behind what they are doing. If activities are to be educative, if they really are to function in the reconstruction of experience, they must be intellectualized. Otherwise they become meaningless routine. To the extent that the school fails to help students to comprehend the full implication of what they do, the criticisms that have been leveled at personal experience-centered activities are justified. However, the good teacher always seeks to enrich the meaning of such activities by relating them to other experiences, both individual and racial.

2. *Many teachers are not prepared to carry on experience-centered programs.* This is certainly true, and it has been shown in numerous connections in this book why it is so. It goes back to the preparation and experience of the teacher, and to the forces of tradition that are operating on him—most of which perpetuate the subject-centered approach. The more prepared the teacher is in some specialized field, the more difficult it is for him to see possibilities in the experience-centered approach. And, as has been pointed out, teacher-education institutions are not helping much to prepare teachers for this shift in emphasis. But the school should really become a learning laboratory for

<sup>12</sup> Many years ago Bagley voiced this criticism of the project method. Since then it has been reiterated frequently. The so-called essentialists would in general support this position.



its teachers. In-service education programs under the guidance of a good leader can accomplish wonders with teachers whose minds are not closed to the possibilities of change.

3. *Communities do not readily accept the shift in emphasis from the subject-centered to the experience-centered activities.* There is much truth in this assertion. It is no accident that the so-called community school has thrived best in relatively backward, or perhaps we could say, "deprived" communities. If a community has no motion-picture theater, it accepts and even applauds the school's efforts to supply one. If it has no general store, the operation of a "cooperative" by the school is logical. If vegetables are spoiling in the fields, the school's help in harvesting and preserving them is welcomed. When industry cannot obtain sufficient adult workers, youths are readily given employment. Work experience is held to be an excellent thing for all students, but usually it is limited to the less favored economic groups. In other words, the experience-centered program often works best in deprived areas, and with deprived groups of students. All this must be changed if the new program is ever to gain wide acceptance. Can it be done? It has already been shown that along with an awakening of community consciousness there is a trend toward the organization of councils made up of representative groups including the school. These have become clearing houses for projects of community improvement pertaining to health, recreation, and social and civic betterment. The school can play a significant role in such an organization. Then, too, there are signs that industrial life is undergoing change toward greater social responsibility. As management and labor come to recognize their responsibilities in developing citizenship, the aims of the school and industrial life will tend to become more unified, and youth will find educative experience in industrial life, just as it now finds educative experience in farm life through the vocational agriculture programs that are common in many rural high schools.

One of the reasons why citizens sometimes do not accept experience-centered programs is that they do not understand them. They do not see how the so-called fundamentals can be taught through projects, units of work, excursions, etc. The school has a responsibility to carry on a sound public relations program to correct these misconceptions.

4. *School plants are not equipped to carry on experience-centered programs.* Again, the truth of this assertion must be generally admitted. There are many practical-arts shops being built today that

contain no equipment for the repair of an automobile, to say nothing of being able to get an automobile into them. There are many, many schools being built with no provision for the care of animals, with completely inadequate libraries, with inadequate provision for arts and crafts, with no space surrounding the school for anything but an athletic stadium. However, administrators and teachers are becoming more conscious of the need for more direct first-hand experience, and suitable buildings, equipment, and grounds are being made available for such activities. The trend is likely to continue unless pressures from without force the schools to place more emphasis upon strictly academic programs in the interest of raising "quality."

5. *Experience-centered programs do not make adequate provision for logical organization.* Many of the proponents of the experience-centered approach to learning are to be blamed for this criticism. They deserve it. When the logical organization of subjects, with its easily understood scope and sequence, is abandoned, all too frequently *all* organization is shown the door. Dewey's plea for the necessity of a philosophy and an appropriate organization of experience<sup>12</sup> is a warning that mere activity is not effective in reconstructing present experience. It was undoubtedly prompted by unintelligent applications of the experience approach. Before the respect of the rank and file of administrators and teachers can be secured, an adequate frame of reference must be provided that will yield sound principles for determining scope and sequence. Otherwise, the experience-centered approach is opportunistic and superficial, and is doomed to failure.

We now turn to *vicarious* experience in the form of systematically organized knowledge as the center for learning activities in the school.

*The nature of systematically organized knowledge* When we think of such knowledge, we usually think of "disciplines" or subjects. A subject, reduced to its simplest terms, is "one of the branches of learning studied in an educational institution." It may also be thought of as a segment of race experience so organized as to make it effective in interpreting new experiences. When we speak of the organization of race experience, we refer to the *system* into which the various race experiences fit. This system is built by the specialist and is by its very nature characterized by logical relationships. For example, the facts, fundamental

<sup>12</sup> John Dewey, *Education and Experience*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1938.

laws, and principles which form the basis of the subject of physics have been painfully and laboriously accumulated for many centuries, each scientist beginning where his predecessor stopped, discovering new problems, testing, and verifying, and finally fitting the new discovery into a logical system. Sometimes the newly discovered facts or principles will overthrow the existing system, in which case a new one must be built which forms a better structure for the classification of knowledge. For example, the experiments of Torricelli, Pascal, and others with the rise of liquids in exhausted tubes led to the important discovery of atmospheric pressure. Before this time, the rise of liquids in exhausted tubes had been explained by saying that "nature abhorred a vacuum." The newly discovered facts and principles had to be classified in relationship to the general laws of pressure and weight of liquids and finally to the kinetic theory of gases. Similarly, the formulation of the atomic theory and the vast research in this field during the past fifty years has added greatly to our knowledge and has revolutionized our concept of the nature of both physics and chemistry.

The important point to consider in this connection is that the essence of the subject of physics is systematic organization. One has only to examine any modern textbook in physics to see how closely this type of organization is followed.<sup>14</sup> Other systems of knowledge, such as chemistry, astronomy, and the like, are all characterized by the accumulation of facts and principles organized into a system.

In fields other than science, the general basis of organization is the same. In geography, the system may be developed around the "earth-round" concept, regionalism, or a number of other unifying ideas, but essentially the result is the same. The subject is organized in terms of the relatedness of the material, rather than in terms of the order of experiencing. In history, the organization is usually chronological, though the treatment of the precise order in which events occurred may be subordinated to large related movements or epochs. This is but another way of building a system. Again the principle involved is the same. In mathematical subjects, the situation is not essentially different. The theorems of geometry all fit together into a related whole which is determined, not by caprice or individual experiencing, but by logical

<sup>14</sup>For example, see Physical Science Study Committee, *Physics*, Boston, D. C. Heath and Company, 1960. This is a textbook for high-school students. Over one-third of the text deals with "electricity and atomic structure."

relationships determined by the specialist and the nature of the subject itself.

These logical systems of knowledge have been taken over by the school and utilized as the subject matter of learning. This means that the material must be simplified in terms of the ability, maturity, and experience of the learner. It has to be made available for large numbers of students of varying abilities and interests. The textbook has served as the most approved instrument for simplifying, illustrating, and adapting the subject-centered curriculum to the learner. Traditionally it has been regarded as the connecting link between the present on-going experience of the student, and the highly perfected organization of race experience. The important thing to remember is that the *present experience of the learner is subordinated to organized race experience*. The idea of the textbook-maker and the teacher is to "psychologize" the subject matter in such a way that the student learns it effectively. The test of the success of teaching is whether or not the student eventually masters the system and can use it in interpreting present and future experiences, though unfortunately the emphasis is usually placed on mastery. If applications are made, they are usually in the *same field*.

When we speak of a subject-centered program, then, we mean that the organization of learning activities is determined by the logical organization of fields of knowledge, or of segments of them. These organized fields of knowledge or segments constitute the backbone of the curriculum. Direct experience may be brought in to help in the mastery of the field.

## ARGUMENTS FAVORING THE SUBJECT-CENTERED CURRICULUM

Why have subject-centered programs gained such widespread acceptance in the high school? Why have so-called direct personal experience programs made so little headway in curriculum development? There are a number of reasons for this situation which cannot be ignored by the curriculum maker. Some of the more important of them are analyzed in succeeding sections.

1. *Systematic organization is regarded as essential to the effective interpretation of experience.* Just as the scientist utilizes systematic organizations of facts and principles as tools for making new investiga-

tions and discovering new meanings and applications, so the individual interprets his present experience by relating it to concepts, generalizations, or principles that have been built up by the race. The meaning of a present experience is never fully understood until it is effectively related to other experiences, both individual and racial. Current events get their full meaning only in terms of an appropriate historical context. The child does not fully understand the simple experience of touching a burning candle until the meaning of "burning" is understood. When this is seen as an example of oxidation that goes on in a wide variety of ways, the experience takes on many new meanings that are effective in controlling and interpreting new experiences. In this way, a system is built up that has the optimal predictive value. The proponents of the subject-centered approach hold that these ready-made systems are necessary for the interpretation of experience. The individual cannot possibly discover all of the connections himself. Hence, ready-made organizations conserve time and energy, and serve as guides to future experience. It isn't likely that the student will be able to work out for himself a better system of organization. Therefore, he had better be taught to use the one that the race has worked out. So runs the argument of the proponents of the subject-centered curriculum.

2. *The organization of the subject-centered curriculum is simple and easily understood.* The scope of the curriculum is usually defined as the areas or functions of living which are explored. It is the entire range of activities which the school utilizes for the purpose of achieving its objectives. When subjects are rejected as the basis of curriculum organization, the problem of determining scope is a very difficult one. Under a subject organization, it is merely a matter of deciding what subjects are to be offered. In practice, this usually involves grouping as constants those subjects that are thought to be indispensable to all students, and as electives other subjects that are offered to meet special interests or needs of students. For example, English and social studies are in most schools regarded as constants while Latin and French are on the elective list. In order to simplify further the curriculum pattern, many schools have arranged their offerings in groups (sometimes referred to as curriculums) of subjects in terms of specialized purposes of students, e.g., college preparatory, commercial, industrial, scientific, or general. Within these patterns the separation between constants and electives is,

ardized tests prescribed and administered by the administrative staff. State-wide scholarship tests further promote uniformity for they are usually based upon the textbooks or courses of study most commonly used. Teachers are loath to depart from the textbook lest the students fall down in the tests.

The growing use of television, programmed learning materials, and teaching machines is likely to result in even greater reliance upon uniformity of testing since such programs are usually prepared for large groups of students in many schools or school systems. Such tests necessarily are of the objective type based upon a fixed scope and sequence.

*5. The colleges have generally approved and perpetuated the subject-centered curriculum through admission requirements.* Traditionally, students have been admitted to college upon the basis of units or credits in specified subjects or by entrance examinations covering the various subject fields. It is logical that this should be the case, for college curriculums are almost exclusively subject-centered. The questionable assumption has been made that certain patterns of units are essential background for successful achievement in college. Naturally high-school principals desire earnestly that their graduates succeed in college. The best way to insure this success is to meet fully the demands of the colleges as to desirable patterns of units. High-school programs of study show clearly this influence. If a high school can offer only a small number of subjects, the demands of the colleges are met first, even though only a small percentage of students may attend college.

In general, the colleges resist accepting subjects such as general science, general mathematics, general language, and the like, for the fulfillment of college-entrance requirements. The practical arts and vocational subjects have also been looked on with suspicion, especially by certain of the Eastern colleges. This attitude has tended to hamper the development of these subjects and to promote a sharp dualism between the programs of the college-bound student and his fellow who completes his formal education in the high school. The colleges have also offered resistance to the acceptance of credit in "fused" or "core" courses. It is not unusual for schools that have unified English and social science in terms of a single course to have to "unscramble" them to conform to the requirements of the colleges for specified numbers of units in English and history. The colleges are a potent influence in maintaining the *status quo* of the high-school curriculum, and this influence has been greatly ex-

tended by the present emphasis upon advanced placement programs, stepped-up college entrance examinations intended to improve the "quality" of the prospective college student, and the awarding of scholarships on the basis of proved academic achievement, especially in science, mathematics, and foreign languages.<sup>12</sup> However, the following quotation under the heading *Lift for the Lopsided* indicates that the picture of college influence is not as black as it is sometimes painted.

Stung by the charge that it favors "grade-getters" and penalizes creative students, the nation's biggest private dispenser of college scholarships last week revamped its selection system. To this year's 850 "well-rounded" winners, the National Merit Scholarship Corp. is adding 85 "lopsided" types in four new categories. Sample winners in each category:

A Maryland boy who acts, paints, writes wild science-fiction, charts the orbits of imaginary planets and understandably gets middling grades "An individual fighting a conformist world," he is now on his way to Harvard College as one of 25 students picked for "exceptional creative performance."

A California girl, sub-par in math, who scored in the upper 2 per cent on the N.M.S. verbal test. Outstanding in writing and history, she is one of 20 winners "showing superior attainment and promise in one field."

A brilliant 17-year-old Massachusetts boy who entered M.I.T. last fall from his high school junior class. He is one of 20 scholarship winners who "have shown an ability to depart from the traditional academic pattern"

A Midwestern farm girl whose family has moved nine times, earns less than \$1,000 a year and forbids her to read books. Despite sub-winning test scores, she is headed for a state college as one of 20 able students picked for "exceptionally determined effort to overcome severe financial or similar disadvantages."<sup>13</sup>

6. *The subject-centered curriculum is generally approved by teachers, parents, and students.* Since the subject-centered curriculum is in use almost universally in high schools, colleges, and universities, it follows that teachers and parents are products of this system of education. High-school teachers, as has been discussed previously, have been trained specifically to teach one or more subjects. This means that in col-

<sup>12</sup> See Jerome S. Bruner, *The Process of Education*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1961, pp. 73-80. He discusses the perils of the growth of "meritocracy—a system of competition in which students are moved ahead and given further opportunities on the basis of their achievement, with positions in later life increasingly and irrevocably determined by earlier school records." (p. 77)

<sup>13</sup> *Time*, LXXVII, 36-37 (April 21, 1961).

lege they have built up "majors" in these fields by means of sequences of specialized, logically organized courses. To these have been added "special methods courses." Prospective teachers are, therefore, equipped to go into the high school and teach specific subjects. They do have some background in modern psychological and educational theory, but this is usually at variance with their academic preparation and their student teaching, which is almost inevitably carried out in a conventional subject field. As stated before, they discover that their preparation fits well into the program which they find in operation in the schools in which they secure jobs. The pressure of this practical situation makes it impossible to apply the theory of the way learning takes place and the way learning experiences should be organized, and the teacher readily and happily accepts the subject-centered system as unavoidable and even desirable. In like manner, since all of the formal education of parents, and generally of students, has been in subject-centered programs, there is a general assumption that the system is sound and should be continued. They tend to distrust courses labeled "core," "orientation," or "general education" as passing fancies and frills. They are apt to regard trips, excursions, student planning, projects, and the like, as conducted tours or entertainments which are amusing but through which little is learned. The covering of ground in a textbook and the mastery of the subject matter contained therein is more tangible and more in keeping with the conception of "real" learning to which parents are accustomed.

To many students, it offers the path of least resistance to an education. The troublesome problem of planning isn't likely to arise. They know what to expect, and have before them the tangible means of realizing the expectations. Lessons are assigned from the textbook and possibly the workbook; blocks of time are arranged within the school day for study. If there is too much to be learned in school, the "lesson" may be "taken home" for completion. The next day they are quizzed on what they have learned. The fixed scope and sequence provides the student with a needed sense of security. Learning may not prove exciting to the student, but he knows what to expect and he can find excitement and stimulation in other aspects of school living.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See James S. Coleman, "The Competition for Adolescent Energies," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLII, 231-236 (March, 1961). After extensive research in a number of different school situations, the author concludes that social approval of the group has a higher status than learning as such. His remedy: Give the student the same opportunity "to achieve for his school" in the academic fields as is now given in the field of interscholastic athletics.



**ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE SUBJECT-CENTERED CURRICULUM**

In spite of its universality, its general acceptance by the colleges, parents, teachers, and students, and its respectability in terms of the cultural heritage, the subject-centered curriculum has been under fire for some time, and many successful attempts have been made to improve it. Some of these are within the patterns of "subjects," while others break more or less completely with the traditional conceptions of curriculum organization. Let us examine in some detail the general criticisms that are being made of the subject-centered curriculum.

1. *The subject-centered curriculum is alleged to be psychologically unsound.* It would be absurd to deny the value of systematized race experience as a vital and necessary instrument for educating the student. Such organization is the result of the struggle of the human race toward civilization. Without these formulated race experiences, man would be little better than the lower animals because he would not be able adequately to profit from the experiences of the past. Education is essentially a process of growth. Starting from a world that William James characterized as "blooming, buzzing confusion," the child gradually extends his experiences, both first-hand and vicarious, to the point where he is able to weave unity and consistency into his world. He gradually brings order and system into his life. In this task, race experience is invaluable. He draws upon subject matter to solve his problems, meet his needs, and extend his interests. From the time he builds block houses on the floor to the establishment of a home of his own, he is drawing heavily upon the experiences of the race. Very early in life, simple stories and pictures of the way other people live help him to understand better his own home. Gradually as he develops more and more skill in reading, he extends the range of his environment. He builds new concepts of "houses," "homes," and "family life." As he is confronted with problems, he is helped to meet them by finding out how others have solved similar problems. As he becomes more mature, he is able to use race experience more and more effectively. Gradually he comes to the point where systematic treatments of science, mathematics, social science, art, are the most effective tools he can use in solving the problem of establishing his own home. He draws from these systems of knowledge to plan, build, and finance his home. His intellectual and esthetic values are re-created through the constant use of organized subject matter. He has

reached the stage in which the psychological and the logical become one and the same thing. But note that direct, first-hand experience is always *antecedent*. Organized subject matter is the instrument for enriching and *extending* it. It is not the *end*, or the goal. The goal for the student is the resolution of tensions, the solving of problems, the satisfaction of needs which grow out of the interactions of a living, dynamic, purposing organism in an equally dynamic environment.

There is an exceedingly wide gap between the experience of the child and the logically formulated experience of the race. This means that while logical relationships are essential in the *organization* of experience, they cannot be imparted ready-made to the child, as John Dewey pointed out many years ago. He stated:

Facts are torn away from their original place in experience and rearranged with reference to some general principle. Classification is not a matter of child experience; things do not come to the individual pigeon-holed. The vital ties of affection, the connecting bonds of activity, hold together the variety of his personal experiences. The adult mind is so familiar with the notion of logically ordered facts that it does not recognize—it cannot realize—the amount of separating and reformulating which the facts of direct experience have to undergo before they can appear as a “study” or branch of learning. A principle, for the intellect, had to be distinguished and defined; facts have had to be interpreted in relation to this principle, not as they are in themselves. They have to be regathered about a new center which is wholly abstract and ideal. . . . The studies as classified are the product, in a word, of the science of the ages, not of the experience of the child.<sup>20</sup>

The difficulty of using these ready-made organizations of race experiences has been emphasized by so many writers that we need only to mention it briefly here. There is the ever-present danger that the learning which results from such organizations is apt to be what is popularly called “book learning.” The students learn symbols, words, without having behind them meaningful experiences. They learn to recite definitions from the textbook glibly, without having the slightest notion of their real meaning. A striking example of this point is found in the familiar story of the failure of many students living in a certain city located on the Mississippi River to make any connection whatever between the Mississippi River

<sup>20</sup> John Dewey, *The Child and the Curriculum*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1902, pp. 10–11. Copyright 1902 by The University of Chicago.

about which they studied in their textbooks and the stream of water which flowed past their doors. The textbook study evidently had failed to function in the lives and experiences of the students. Even though they learned to recite the material to the complete satisfaction of the teacher, they merely acquired verbal knowledge which was soon forgotten because it failed to function in experience. In a real sense it served effectively to separate the students from their world.

Such is the case against the logical organization of subject matter. Society has sought to transmit the experiences of the race in the form of a definite logically organized curriculum with the result that the gulf between the growing child and society has become wider and wider as race experience, because of the increasing complexity of civilized social life, makes adult activities more and more remote from the experiences of childhood.

Even though it is recognized in the light of the newer psychology that such systematized knowledge is often far from experience, particularly that of adolescents, this is very different from saying that such knowledge cannot be made to function in experience through proper treatment. Race experience cannot and need not be ignored. Through the student's ability to use language, experience remote in time and place can be made vital. "Book learning" deserves all the scorn and ridicule which it has received, but the remedy lies along the line of vitalizing race experience rather than discarding it. Thus logical organization properly utilized implies not only an educational ideal of a remote future but is very significant in determining a direction which the educative process should take. It becomes, as Dewey points out, a guiding principle for dealing with the present development of the student's experience. It affords a guiding principle in interpreting and giving direction to the activity of the student. In succeeding chapters we shall attempt to show more clearly how this may be accomplished.

2. *The subject-centered curriculum is remote from the democratic values that the modern school seeks to achieve.* Even though we grant the merits of logical systems of knowledge in helping the student to meet his problems, and eventually to refine his own conceptual system, it must be emphasized that this value is not achieved directly but rather through *helping* the student to use race experience effectively. The center of orientation is *the student and his world* rather than the refined system of knowledge of the world of adults. The democratic school is seeking to

build characteristics of personality such as creativeness, cooperativeness, social sensitivity, ability to think reflectively, and tolerance. These values are best achieved when the actual vital experience of the student in living his life in the home, the school, and the community is made the center of his curriculum. To attempt to achieve them by centering exclusively upon accumulated race experience tends to promote mere verbalism and frequently to set up a dualism between the life of the student and the work of the school. Achieving democratic values is a matter of *living* them, and of reflecting upon the experiences that are being lived.

One reason why so many very good statements of democratic objectives have failed to influence practices is that the school has adopted these values but has failed to change the curriculum in order to use the most effective means of achieving the ends. It associates thinking with the mastery of facts on the plausible ground that facts are needed with which to think. It approves highly of social sensitivity, cooperativeness, and tolerance as ends, but assumes that ideas *about* them will take effect in conduct without actual living experience. The timeworn analogy of the correspondence course in swimming applies here. The student may "pass." In neither case is he likely to be able to apply what he has "learned."

#### PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE SUBJECT-CENTERED APPROACH TO LEARNING

In spite of the shortcomings of subject-centered courses or programs, hardly anyone would propose their abolition. Similarly, even the most vociferous critics of direct personal experience would most certainly fight for the retention of such experiences *under appropriate conditions*. Let us now examine briefly some of the ways in which subject-centered courses may be improved.

**Direct first-hand experience in the subject-centered curriculum** Current practices in the subject-centered approach reveal that in the better schools, direct first-hand experience is being more widely utilized to vitalize instruction.

The social-studies area places much stress upon trips to community and governmental agencies; the best science programs include individual and group experiences not only in the laboratory but also in the community. The breeding and raising of animals has become an indispensable



*Courtesy, Dade County, Florida Public Schools Photo by F. Edgar Lane*

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A dramatization of "Julius Caesar" by a tenth-grade group in world history in the Miami, Florida, Senior High School (Dade County, Florida). The course is correlated with tenth-grade English and Latin.

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The following illustrations may help to point up the fact that there are untold possibilities for introducing direct experience into the subject-

centered curriculum. They are selected almost at random from Mort and Vincent's study.<sup>21</sup>

*Safety Survey.* Following our study of home safety, my seventh-grade pupils undertook to make an inspection of their homes. They listed all the fire hazards and all the safety hazards which they found. Each pupil brought his list to class. The class divided into groups to consider the individual reports of the members. In their discussion the groups decided what should be done to remedy each hazardous situation. These suggestions were carried out at home wherever possible, and group representatives made a report of accomplishments.<sup>22</sup>

*Grocery and Drygoods Store.* As a part of its training of distribution and commercial workers, the commercial department of our school sets up a student shop each year at one end of the school cafeteria. The store is a complete retail grocery during the first semester and goods are furnished by local stores. During the second semester the store is fitted out as a boys' and girls' furnishing shop. Pupils visit local merchants, make selections from their stock, arrange to have goods shipped to the school, arrange the goods in the school store, make sales to the school children (and others who may come in to buy), make out saleslips and other sales records, keep books and take inventory. Goods are secured on consignment from the local stores, sold at the same price as in the stores from which they originated, and the sales price is turned back to the merchants. No competition with private enterprise exists in this project. All unsold goods are also returned.<sup>23</sup>

*Testing Recipes.* Our home-economics girls felt that many of the recipes and suggestions in magazines and newspapers were probably good and many others probably were not. Several girls asked if they could form a group to carry on some testing and have a portion of the foods room as a little testing laboratory. The members of this group each undertook a small research problem in the investigation of recipes and food suggestions made in magazines. After each testing they judged the recipe on how well it turned out and reported to the class on their results. Those recipes which turned out most satisfactorily were placed in a file to be used for school and home cooking. Meeting together, this little experimental group attempted also to

<sup>21</sup> By permission from *Modern Educational Practice*, by Paul R. Mort and William S. Vincent. Copyright, 1950. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. New York. For other illustrations see: Vernon E. Anderson, Paul R. Grim, and William T. Gruhn, *Principles and Practices of Secondary Education*. New York, The Ronald Press, 1951; Edward Olsen (and others), *School and Community Programs*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1949.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.



formulate criteria by which suggestions appearing in magazines could be evaluated on reading without the necessity of resorting to experiment in each instance.<sup>24</sup>

*Weather Station.* A weather station was established in our science class as an outgrowth of a unit on weather. Groups of pupils rotate in obtaining information from our weather station situated on top of the school building. Barometer, thermometer, and instruments for measuring wind velocity and precipitation are among our equipment. Regular reports on our observations are made to the weather bureau. A pupil who is both experienced and highly interested in observing weather phenomena is in charge of each pupil group.<sup>25</sup>

*Italian-American Workshop.* Our community has a large group of people of Italian background. As a move in the direction of better intercultural relations we held a workshop during May and June in which the members of our advanced high-school classes participated. Advanced students in Italian, students in the literature classes, the dramatics and music groups, the journalism group, teachers of these classes, and various laymen of the community, both of Italian background and others, all took part in the workshop.

We did a libretto for *Pinocchio* and set it to music from Italian operas. The music was produced and played four times. We translated Italian poetry into English and English poetry into Italian, and did the same with songs (both Italian and American), anecdotes, family incidents, and stories. Some of these were published in the Italian-language newspaper and some in the English-language newspapers of our community. Many of the songs were sung, with both Italian and English stanzas, by groups of pupils in assemblies, in public meetings in the town, and over the radio.<sup>26</sup>

These activities are good illustrations of what happens when teachers set out to vitalize the subject-centered curriculum. As the extent of direct experience which is introduced increases, the amount of emphasis upon a logical scope and sequence is bound to decrease, with the result that a given course may no longer appropriately be classified as subject-centered. There will also be a tendency for such courses to cut across subject lines since direct experiences do not normally take place within the confines of one field of knowledge. The last activity reported above drew upon literature, foreign languages, journalism, and music, and might well have included social studies.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 186-187.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 289.

Within the subject-centered program it is not uncommon to find considerable emphasis upon work experience, field trips, community projects of various sorts, and upon a program of student activities, including student government. These emphases are for the most part experience-centered. What is needed in such schools is a careful rethinking of the total curricular program with a view of making direct personal experience an integral part of the program rather than a supplement to it.

**Revitalizing the subject-centered curriculum** Perhaps the central emphasis of this movement is best presented by Jerome S. Bruner<sup>27</sup> who directed a conference of thirty-five scientists, scholars, and educators at Woods Hole on Cape Cod in 1959. The conference was prompted by "a conviction that we are at the beginning of a period of new progress in, and concern for, creating curricula and ways of teaching science, and that a general appraisal of this progress and concern was in order, so as to better guide developments in the future."<sup>28</sup>

The report, because it catches up much of the present activity in curriculum study, will be summarized by a series of statements which seem to us to represent the views of the group.

1. Who should make curricula? The report takes cognizance of the fact that scholars "in the forefront of their disciplines" have, generally speaking, not been involved in the development of curricula for elementary and secondary schools. This has resulted in inaccurate and inadequate treatment of knowledge. The remedy, of course, lies in "a joining of the efforts of eminent scholars, wise and skillful teachers, and those trained in the fields related to teaching and learning."<sup>29</sup>

2. The mastery of facts and information, development of mechanical habits and skills, should give way to the understanding of the *structure* of a discipline. "Grasping the structure of a subject is understanding it in

<sup>27</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. vii. The representatives included scholars in the various disciplines who were directing studies of their specialties in various parts of the country. The field of *education* was represented by a dean, a professor, and a representative of the Educational Testing Service. Also present were psychologists whose special interests included intelligence and learning. The author states, "Strange as it may seem, this was the first time psychologists had been brought together with leading scientists to discuss the process involved in teaching their various disciplines" (p. ix). For another "first-time" see: Committee on the Function of Science in General Education, *Science in General Education*, New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1938. This committee worked under the direction of the Commission on Secondary School Curriculum.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

a way that permits many other things to be related to it meaningfully. To learn structure, in short, is to learn how things are related."<sup>30</sup> In other words, structure consists of the fundamental principles, ideas, or generalizations which define and give meaning and order to the discipline. *Decisions regarding what generalizations are fundamental in a given discipline can only be made with the help of the specialist in that field.*

The logic back of the shift from mastery of materials from a textbook to the teaching of generalizations is that such teaching facilitates transfer of training and "the more fundamental and basic the idea he [the student] has learned, almost by definition, the greater will be its breadth of applicability to new problems. Indeed, this is almost a tautology for what is meant by 'fundamental' in this sense is precisely that an idea has wide as well as powerful applicability."<sup>31</sup>

3. The fundamental generalizations of a discipline are, insofar as is possible, learned through *discovery* by the student rather than by having him master the generalizations which the curriculum makers decide are within his maturity level. This process of discovery involves "intuitive thinking," which is just another term for formulating hypotheses or guesses as to the solution of a problem. The guess, of course, has to be tested. "It is the intuitive mood, however, that yields hypotheses quickly, that hits upon combinations of ideas before their worth is known. In the end, intuition by itself yields a tentative ordering of a body of knowledge that, while it may generate a feeling that the ordering of facts is self-evident, aids principally by giving us a basis for moving ahead in our testing of reality."<sup>32</sup>

But *discovery* involves more than is ordinarily meant by reflective thinking. It means the cultivation of the attitudes and techniques on the part of the learner which characterized the discovery of the fundamental ideas by the mathematician, the physicist, or the historian. In other words, the student becomes a physicist, or a historian, as he goes about the task of bringing meaning and order to the learning situation. Is it

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18. This theory of transfer was developed by Charles H. Judd, John Dewey, Boyd H. Bode, and others, many years ago. See Chapter IV of this volume for a discussion of this point.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60. This position seems to be little more than an up-dating of John Dewey's *How We Think*. Revised Edition, Boston, D. C. Heath and Co., 1933. The first edition of this important book appeared in 1910.

possible to so order the learning activities that *all* learning involves discovery?<sup>13</sup>

4. The above proposals for vitalizing the curriculum are predicated upon the recognition that children and youth pass through certain characteristic stages of intellectual development varying from "manipulating the world through action" to operating in terms of "hypothetical propositions." The author of the report advances "the hypothesis that any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development. . . . The general hypothesis that has just been stated is premised on the considered judgment that any idea can be presented honestly and usefully in the thought forms of children of school age, and that these first representations can later be made more powerful and precise the more easily by virtue of this early learning."<sup>14</sup> As the child advances through the various stages of development the ideas, of course, take on more richness and depth. This suggests that all disciplines should be taught in the primary grades "in some intellectually honest form." This continuous development of the fundamental ideas of the various disciplines is central to curriculum development. This is what is meant by "the spiral curriculum," a term which takes on more meaning when the author of the report asserts:

If one respects the ways of thought of the growing child, if one is courteous enough to translate material into this logical form and challenging enough to tempt him to advance, then it is possible to introduce him at an early age to the ideas and styles that in later life make an educated man. We might ask, as a criterion for any subject taught in primary school, whether, when fully developed it is worth an adult's knowing, and whether having known it as a child makes a person a better adult. If the answer to both questions is negative or ambiguous, then the material is cluttering the curriculum.<sup>15</sup>

The "spiral curriculum," then, should have its roots in the primary grades in the form of disciplines, defined as ordered fundamental ideas which become more powerful and more applicable to life situations as

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*; see pp. 21 ff. for a discussion of this point. The technique of defining a discipline in terms of basic generalizations—to be discovered by the student—was employed by the Committee on the Function of Science in General Education, *op. cit.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

the student advances. This is perhaps an overstatement of the position, since the author, by way of further explanation of the spiral curriculum says: "If the hypothesis with which this section was introduced is true—that any subject can be taught to any child in some honest form—then it should follow that a curriculum ought to be built around the great issues, principles, and values that a society deems worthy of the continual concern of its members."<sup>26</sup>

And now to summarize Bruner's position: The curriculum should be built by eminent scholars in their respective disciplines, psychologists, and skillful teachers; it should be built upon the basis of the fundamental ideas, principles, or generalizations of each discipline; students should be led to discover these ideas, principles, or generalizations by a process of intuitive and analytical thinking which boils down to the process of reflective thinking. The structure of the curriculum emerges for the student when, at his own level of development and in terms of his interests, he apprehends, tests, expands, and enriches the fundamental ideas which define each discipline (or subject). Presumably, the "great issues" and "values" of the society will ultimately be translated into generalizations which have been "internalized" by the student and applied to daily living.

Obviously the Woods Hole Conference did not produce a curriculum, but it did set some guidelines for the improvement of the subject-centered curriculum. That some of the proposals are already being carried out is attested by reference in the report to a number of studies in progress, representatives of some of which were members of the conference.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52. For an elaboration of this position, see Jerome S. Bruner, "After John Dewey, What?" *Saturday Review*, XLIV, 58-59; 76-78 (June 17, 1961). This article is essentially a criticism of Dewey's philosophy based solely upon one of Dewey's earliest (1897) statements of position which was greatly clarified in later works, e.g., *Experience and Education*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1938.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. vii-viii. Among these studies are the following:

1. American Institute of Biological Science Curriculum Study, Directed by Arnold B. Grobman,\* University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado.
2. University of Illinois Arithmetic Project, Directed by David Page,\* Urbana, Ill.
3. University of Illinois Committee on School Mathematics, Directed by Max Beberman, Urbana, Ill.
4. Physical Sciences Study Committee, Elbert P. Little, Executive Director, Educational Services, Incorporated, Watertown, Massachusetts. (The Committee was represented at the conference by Francis L. Friedman.)
5. School Mathematics Study Group, Directed by E. G. Begle,\* Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut (not specifically mentioned).

\* Members of the conference.

Undoubtedly, this report has great potentialities for vitalizing the high school curriculum; the ideas set forth are, for the most part, not new, but they have been presented with a freshness and enthusiasm that may "catch on" in areas in which they have been rejected as presented in earlier studies. Perhaps, too, the auspices under which the conference was held may tend to give the report the needed prestige for carrying its recommendations into effect and stimulating further study.

We might be disposed to rest the case at this point were it not for the fact that certain questions need to be asked. Let's suggest a few of them: (1) Do we want a curriculum that is organized solely in terms of the recognized intellectual disciplines? For example, are the "great issues" and "ideals" to be allocated to specific disciplines for presentation? Do not great issues transcend the boundaries of specific disciplines? For example, take the burning issue, "Should Red China be admitted to the United Nations?" This issue involves ethics or morality, geography, sociology, anthropology, technology, and mathematics, as well as broad cultural considerations. Are the various aspects to be compartmentalized in terms of structured disciplines? (2) Do we want to support a program which proposes that the structured disciplines be taught, in simplified form of course, to beginning school children? Would not such a program lead eventually to compartmentalization of the life of the child and thus violate the best we know about child development and learning? (3) Will the teacher be robbed of the excitement of "discovery" if the curriculum is developed by high-level experts, operating with huge grants from foundations, private corporations, and the federal government, and is handed down to him in the form of textbooks, with manuals of instruction, supplementary books, apparatus, films, and testing devices geared into it? (4) Are we ready to give up the idea that local groups, including teachers, administrators, laymen, and consultants should have the primary responsibility for curriculum development, drawing of course on all pertinent and available research? If we do give up this idea, will the profession of teaching be enhanced or weakened?

**Other studies directed toward curriculum improvement** In addition to the studies referred to above, there are many others in process which certainly are significant for the future of high-school education. Some of the more prominent are these:

1. The Chemical Bond Project, Directed by Laurence E. Strong, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana.

2. National Task Force on Economic Education, directed by George Leland Bach, Carnegie Institute of Technology.

3. Commission on English, directed by Floyd Rinker, Boston, Mass.

4. Commission on the English Language of the *National Council of Teachers of English*, directed by W. Nelson Francis, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa.

5. The Exploratory Committee on the Concept Approach to Curriculum Development in English, directed by Erwin Steinberg, Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburgh, Pa.

6. Committee on the State of Knowledge about Composition, directed by Richard Braddock, State University of Iowa, Ames, Iowa.

7. Project on History, directed by W. Burlie Brown, Tulane University, New Orleans, La.

8. University of Maryland Mathematics Project, directed by John R. Mayor, University of Maryland, College Park, Md.

9. University of Illinois Committee on School Mathematics, directed by Max Beberman, Urbana, Ill.

10. Project on Social Studies, Merrill F. Hartshorn, ex-Secretary, *National Council for the Social Studies*, Washington, D. C.<sup>38</sup>

Along with the above studies should be mentioned the NEA Project on the Instructional Program of the Public Schools<sup>39</sup> which was initiated in 1959. A National Committee made up of School Administrators, professional educators, and teachers was appointed by the President of the National Education Association to determine policies and projects to be undertaken.

A brief description of the project follows:

#### *Two Major Areas of Concern and Related Issues*

The Project is focused upon the two major areas of concern to the teaching profession . . . and upon some crucial issues that are related to each area.

1. "What to Teach" will be concerned with problems such as the role of the school in relationship to other educational agencies, pushing subjects "down," advanced placement, community pressures, the impact of large-scale national studies, and the explosion of knowledge. The Project will

<sup>38</sup> The authors are indebted to Richard I. Miller, Associate Director of the National Education Association's *Project on Instruction*, for supplying lists of studies in progress.

<sup>39</sup> Ole Sands is Director of the Project, and Richard I. Miller is Associate Director. It will terminate in August, 1962.

attempt to develop a methodology and a set of standards for judging what to teach.

2. "Organizing for Instruction" will be concerned with two major aspects of organization: (a) organizing of the curriculum, with special attention to content, examining whether it should be organized around subjects, broad fields of knowledge, persistent problems of living, and the like; and (b) organizing of the resources of the school, examining issues such as instructional technology, team-teaching, and departmentalization.

### *Methodology for Studying Each Area of Concern*

1. Identify and clarify issues in each area of concern.
2. Analyze each issue, using data from five sources—the disciplines, societal forces and trends, human growth and development, learning, and the status of present practices.
3. Interpret the data in terms of clearly formulated values (e.g., the school's philosophy) to propose alternative solutions.
4. Suggest guidelines for decision-making and evidence for the guidelines from the data-sources mentioned in #2. Propose methods of inquiry by which local schools can make their own decisions.
5. Recommend a position or a course of action, if the evidence warrants.

In brief, the methodology involves (1) issues, (2) guidelines, (3) evidence, (4) alternative solutions, and (5) a position and/or a method of inquiry.

### *Five Major Data-Sources*

The two major areas of concern and related issues will consider five sources of data in their analyses. These are:

1. *The disciplines:* A major data-source is the nature of knowledge and the content of knowledge in the various disciplines. The unprecedented expansion of knowledge has prompted several promising inquiries into the nature of knowledge and into the "commonalities" of knowledge—inquiries that could have far-reaching repercussions upon the instructional program.

In addition, more than a score of fundamental reappraisals and redefinitions of various disciplines are underway. Many of these studies have important implications for the instructional program. A seminar on the disciplines, sponsored by the Project, is being planned for the summer of 1961. It will focus upon how the various large-scale national studies and the frontier thinking in "ways of knowing" can be made more meaningful to teachers.

2. *Societal forces and trends:* Technological change and economic growth, the explosion of population and knowledge, international interdependence, and the rise of communism and nationalism are prominent societal forces that exercise significant influence upon the instructional program.



Selected social scientists, educators, and public leaders discussed and analyzed prominent societal forces and trends during a two-day seminar in Washington in October 1960. This seminar served as a data-source for the Project publication entitled "Education in a Changing Society."

3. *Human growth and development.* What do recent researches in this field tell us about readiness, about factors of physical growth that affect learning, and so forth?
4. *Learning:* The nature of learning will be a major source of data. How does learning take place? What conditions promote optimum learning? What do recent researches in learning tell us?
5. *Status study:* A modest questionnaire and interview study of the status of key practices in the two major areas of concern is being conducted in cooperation with the NEA Research Division. The "Status Study" is focusing upon what changes have taken place in selected aspects of the instructional program since 1955, what is the present status of these selected aspects, and what changes are anticipated in the near future—up to 1965. The study also is looking into forces and pressures influencing changes in the instructional program. The questionnaire is being sent to a statistically selected sample of school principals. Follow-up interviews will be conducted with a small number of cases.

Papers focusing upon the application of knowledge from the preceding five data-sources to the resolution of specific instructional issues are in preparation.<sup>40</sup>

Several publications are in the planning stages, including a final summary report ("A Platform for Instruction") based upon the best available evidence from experience and research. Suggestions for implementation will then be made to local school systems.

We have now completed our presentation of the nature, advantages and disadvantages of the experience-centered and subject-centered approaches to the high-school curriculum and have suggested ways of improving each. In the judgment of the authors, the two concepts are not antithetical. Programs based upon direct experience and upon organized disciplines in fields of knowledge may enjoy "peaceful coexistence" in the same school. An example would be a general education program based upon a problems-centered core, Type IV (see Chapter V) which was structured in terms of the major areas of adolescent living, with learning experiences drawing freely on organized knowledge, and a specialized

<sup>40</sup> Quoted from *The NEA Project on the Instructional Program of the Public Schools*, A mimeographed report, Washington, D.C., National Education Association, February 23, 1961.

education program (see Chapter VII) based upon systematically organized subjects or fields of knowledge, drawing heavily upon direct, personal experience. In addition to the organized subjects, the school would also offer courses in the fine and practical arts, music, dramatics, and the like, which might well be experience-centered, with structure being built by the student as he matures.

## SUMMARY

There are two kinds of experience (1) direct, personal, and (2) vicarious, represented by organized race experience in the form of subjects. These two kinds of experience with proper conditions enrich and supplement each other. What is needed is a balance between them.

Direct, personal experience has an active and a passive aspect. On the one hand, the individual is carrying on an activity. On the other, he is undergoing certain consequences as a result of interaction with the environment. Out of this interaction grows meaning, which is essential to experience. A curriculum based upon direct, personal experience is much more apt to be meaningful to the student than one based upon the logical organization of subject matter. Such a curriculum, however, must draw heavily upon logically organized subject matter if it is to be effective. The core curriculum, interpreted in terms of adolescent problems, is one of the leading types of organization for utilizing direct experience. Its structure is determined by areas of living, rather than by organized fields of knowledge.

The subject-centered approach to learning is almost universally practiced in the American high school. It has been assumed that logically organized race experience is a satisfactory basis for organizing learning experience. It has persisted in spite of its psychological shortcomings and its relative ineffectiveness in contributing to democratic purposes, because of the prestige of science, the endorsement of the colleges, the simplicity of the curriculum pattern which it provides, and the general approval of administrators, teachers, laymen, and students. Many of its weaknesses tend to be corrected by the breaking down of subject lines and the inclusion of much direct experience for the purpose of illuminating facts and principles. A number of significant studies looking toward the improvement of the subject-centered curriculum are in progress. Most of them propose the organization of the subject in terms of central ideas, con-

cepts, or generalizations, rather than facts and information. There is also much emphasis upon the psychological aspects of learning such as problem-solving and discovery of significant ideas, which more readily transfer to novel situations.

It is possible for experience-centered and subject-centered programs to exist side by side in a school and to supplement and reinforce each other.

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# 6

## *Curriculum Designs for General Education*



A GREAT DEAL of confusion exists among high-school and college educators as to what constitutes general education and how it should be organized, and practices range from setting up groups of "liberal" courses in the major disciplines, from which the student is required to elect a certain number on the ground that they are broadening, to programs which are based on common needs or problems. Before dealing with the designs for general education we shall attempt to clarify the concept of general education.

What is general education? Any consideration of the meaning and role of general education in the high school must take as its point of departure the major goals of education in our democratic society. These were presented in Chapter II. What is now proposed is that we attempt to see what these goals imply for the organization of the high-school curriculum. To this end, we shall first look at what might, on the surface, appear to be antithetical goals. Now, as never before in our history, we need to be unified in terms of our commitments to democratic values if we are to survive as a nation. This, of course, does not mean that all citizens must think alike on all problems. Indeed, the respect for differences is a very precious value; the protection and enhancement of this value is only possible when it is held in common. Our commitment to the concept of a free society calls for renewed dedication on the part of all citizens if freedom is to flourish or even survive. Likewise, our commitment to the free play of intelligence as a way of solving problems has little chance of survival unless we have a united front against the pres-

asures of those who would destroy democracy. Another commitment which undergirds democracy as a way of life is the belief in the essential worth of the individual, which calls for equality of opportunity for individual fulfillment. These are illustration of the values which must be held in common if we are to remain a free people.

Are the goals of individual fulfillment and cultural unity incompatible? Quite the contrary is true. Individual fulfillment cannot be achieved except in a climate of freedom, where common values are shared by all, and all participate in their reconstruction and refinement.

John Gardner has stated the case well in the following passage:

America's greatness has been the greatness of a free people who shared certain moral commitments. Freedom without moral commitment is aimless and promptly self-destructive. It is an ironic fact that as individuals in our society have moved toward conformity in their outward behavior, they have moved away from any sense of deeply shared purposes. We must restore *both* a vigorous sense of individuality and a sense of shared purposes. Either without the other leads to consequences abhorrent to us.

To win our deepest respect the individual must both find himself and lose himself. This is not so contradictory as it sounds. We respect the man who places himself at the service of values which transcend his own individuality—the values of his profession, his people, his heritage, and above all the religious and moral values which nourished the ideal of individual fulfillment in the first place. But this “gift of himself” only wins our admiration if the giver has achieved a mature individuality and if the act of giving does not involve an irreparable crippling of that individuality. We cannot admire faceless, mindless servants of the State or the Cause or the Organization who were never mature individuals and who have sacrificed all individuality to the Corporate Good.<sup>1</sup>

It is clear then that public education, as one of our society's chief instruments for providing optimal development of the individual and dedication to common goals, needs to provide the conditions and opportunities for individual fulfillment in a context of ideals, values, understandings, and skills that are needed by all for effective citizenship.

In carrying out this twofold function, the school must never lose sight of the fact that individual fulfillment and common social commitments are inseparable. Individuality cannot be developed in a vacuum. The

<sup>1</sup> John W. Gardner, *Excellence*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1961, p. 137. (Italics in original.)

sharing of common goals thrives only as the unique contributions of the individual are elicited and utilized. However, the essential unity of both types of development does not mean that the school should give equal emphasis to both factors in *all* curricular experiences. An attempt to do this would not even be desirable. For example, a teacher working with a group of students making a survey of problems of living in Columbus, Ohio, would utilize the particular interests and abilities of students in carrying out various phases of the project, such as government, parks and playground, transportation, housing, and the like, but the emphasis would necessarily fall on group and sub-group activities directed toward the development of common understandings and common goals. On the other hand, a specialized course in science might give more attention to individual experimentation and instruction in terms of the particular needs and problems of students. Group activity, quite correctly, would be of secondary importance. In an art class, each student might for a period of time work on his own projects without reference to group goals. Perhaps these illustrations provide a clue to the meaning of general education.

Even though these two aspects of development are inseparable from the standpoint of the organization of the high-school curriculum, it seems possible and desirable to provide curricular experiences directed primarily toward the development of general citizenship (common ideals, values, understandings) and also curricular experiences directed primarily toward the cultivation of special abilities, talents, and interests of an avocational and vocational nature. While both of these types of curricular experiences should be permeated with the *same spirit*, content and method must differ significantly. It would seem then that we are justified in designating the first type of experience, *General education*, and the second, *Specialized education*. Obviously general education, emphasizing shared ideals, values, understandings, and skills, should be required of all students at a given level. It is equally obvious that specialized education, both non-vocational and vocational, designed to provide for the meeting of special needs and interests and the cultivation of special talents, skills, and the like, should be restricted to appropriate groups and individuals determined by a program of assessment of individual potentialities.

This interpretation of general and specialized education is somewhat at variance with many current conceptions which tend to contrast general and vocational education and give no place to specialized non-vocational

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This interpretation of general and specialized education is somewhat at variance with many current conceptions which tend to contrast general and vocational education and give no place to specialized non-vocational

education. General education, according to some interpreters, particularly at the college level, is supposed to be liberal in the sense that it is not directed toward practical specific vocational goals, but rather is directed toward the cultivation of the intellect or the transmission of the cultural heritage. Thus, even advanced courses in mathematics, science, foreign languages, and the like are frequently classified as general education. On the other hand, courses that are designed to prepare for specific vocational skills or understandings are thought of as lacking a liberal quality. The practice of considering general education as embracing all education that is *not* vocational contributes to the curriculum maker's confusion. The view here expressed regards all *good* education as having a liberalizing quality even though goals may vary considerably. While we regard the quality of "liberalism" very highly, it is not a very helpful concept in defining the kinds of experience that are needed by all or in defining that part of the curriculum directed toward meeting special interests, needs, and talents of students.

**Specialized education** As we have defined the term, general education, a separation (in organization) between general and specialized education is justified at the point where special interests can no longer be effectively dealt with in groups organized primarily in terms of common concerns. For example, a group might be working on *housing* in Columbus, Ohio. Certain members of the class might be especially concerned with styles of architecture in various parts of the city. A group made up of students with this interest might go far beyond the common activities of the class, but the findings of the group would be utilized to enrich the common understandings of the class. If and when interests become so specialized that they cannot well be served in the general-education program, either because of time, facilities, or the need for specialized competence in teaching, special provisions should be made for them in the elective part of the curriculum. At this point we are justified in designating such activities as specialized education, non-vocational or vocational depending upon the goals of the group. Of course, individuals working in such a group continue to practice citizenship and therefore such specialized education makes a contribution to general education.

Many of these specialized interests or needs are in no sense vocational in character. For example, a student may be interested in photography as a hobby with no intention of making it a vocation. He may pursue this interest to the point of becoming an expert, and it goes with-

out saying that the school should help him to acquire continuously more complex insights and skills. In order to accomplish this the school must provide for specialized instruction and a specialized environment where he and his fellows with similar interests may achieve their purposes. True, the student may acquire some of the basic competencies in photography in the program of general education provided for *all*, but there is a point at which the interest may be more effectively developed in a specialized environment. Similar illustrations might be given in the fields of music, art, science, mathematics—in short in any of the major fields of knowledge or human endeavor. For this reason, it seems feasible to designate such courses or activities as *non-vocational specialized education*. In addition to making provision for non-vocational specialized education, the modern comprehensive high school recognizes its responsibility for providing for vocational competence. Courses in business education preparing directly for positions in the commercial world, courses in industrial education leading directly to employment in industry, courses in cosmetology designed to prepare beauty-shop operators, are examples of the wide variety of vocational opportunities which the modern school is obligated to offer if it is to meet the specialized needs of students. Needless to say, this aspect of the program should also make an indirect contribution to general citizenship education. These courses or activities should be designated as *vocational specialized education*.

To sum up, *General Education* is that part of the program which is *required of all students* at a given level on the ground that it is essential to the development of the common values, attitudes, understandings, and skills needed by all for common democratic citizenship. *Specialized Education* is that part of the program which is designed to meet the special needs and interests of individuals or groups. This part of the program includes both non-vocational and vocational opportunities.

#### DESIGNING THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM: PROPOSALS AND PRACTICES

While there has been almost universal agreement among educators that a relatively large part of the high-school program should be given over to the development of ideals, understandings, abilities, skills, and the like, needed by all for common citizenship, there are wide differences

of opinion as to what such a program should include and how it should be organized.

In the past, the proposals for organizing such programs have been many and varied.<sup>2</sup> In this volume we shall deal only with significant current proposals and practices and their evaluation.

There are various ways of organizing the program of general education in the high school. However, the terminology used by curriculum workers to designate these differing types of organization is extremely confusing. For example, the following terms are current in the literature: *Basic Education*, *Fundamental Learning*, *Common Learnings*, *Self-Contained Classes*, *General Education Classes*, *Unified Studies*, *Correlated Studies*, *Core-Type Classes*, "True" *Core Classes*, *Block-Time Classes*, and, of course, *Required Courses*. In addition, the term *Core* has been widely used. While it might be possible to assign distinctive meanings to each of these terms, in practice many of them are used interchangeably.

At the risk of adding to the confusion, the authors use the term *Core* in describing various types of organization, but recognize that, in the interest of clarity, it is necessary to distinguish between various types of *core programs*. By the use of this classification, it is hoped that a given school may more easily identify its practices with a given type designation.

## TYPES OF CORE PROGRAMS IN GENERAL EDUCATION

**Type-one core, based upon separate subjects** In this type, the general-education program consists of a series of separately organized subjects or fields of knowledge. Several of them may be taught by the same teacher. This is the practice in many seventh and eighth-grade classes. Beginning with the ninth grade, however, each required course is usually

<sup>2</sup> For important earlier proposals, see the following: *The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education*, Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, Washington, D.C., Bureau of Education, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1918; Alexander Inglis, *Principles of Secondary Education*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1918 (Reprinted in 1953); *Education For All American Youth—A Further Look*, National Education Association, Educational Policies Commission, Washington, D.C., National Education Association, 1951 (Original Edition was published in 1948); Stephen M. Corey, and others, *General Education in the American High School*, New York, Scott, Foresman and Company, 1942; T. R. McConnell, ed., *A Design for General Education*, Washington, D.C., American Council on Education, 1944.

taught by a teacher who has had special preparation in that field. There is little or no attempt to correlate these required subjects, though this may be done in an informal manner. The teacher may follow an adopted textbook or a syllabus provided for him, or he may work out his own ideas of scope and sequence in covering the subject. Within the organized subject-matter structure, the teacher may provide for individual differences in a variety of ways. The essential point to keep in mind in identifying this type of organization is that the *various required subjects are taught separately* with few, if any, attempts to show relationships between or among the various required courses.

In by far the largest number of schools, the various required subjects are taught separately in single periods, but at the junior high-school level there is a growing trend, more discernible in the seventh and eighth grades, to deal with two or more of these subjects in a "time-block" longer than one period, under one teacher. This practice is often justified by the claim that it makes far easier the transition from the self-contained classroom of the elementary school to the highly departmentalized programs which usually begin in the ninth grade. Usually, English and social studies are taught in the time-block, the other required subjects being handled in separate periods.

It should be noted that the mere organization of some of the required subjects in a time-block in nowise alters the curriculum content or the teaching procedures; hence it should not be regarded as a distinctive design. In the design under discussion, it is to be regarded as an administrative device to make it possible for the teacher to become better acquainted with his students, and hence to guide them more intelligently.

We are all familiar with the *Type-One Core Program*, since it characterizes most of the high schools today. Perhaps, however, an illustration is in order. Certain subjects or fields of knowledge are required of all students at more or less specified levels. Those responsible for curriculum development determine what subjects are deemed to be essential for all, subject, of course, to requirements laid down by state legislatures, state departments of education, and regional accrediting agencies. Typically, a four-year high school organized on this basis would require three years of English (consisting largely of grammar, composition, and literature), one year of American history and government, one year of "problems of democracy," one year of general science, and two or three years

of health and physical education. These requirements constitute about one-half of the requirements for graduation.<sup>3</sup>

The designation of the organized subject program in which each subject is taught "separately" as a "core" is justified on the ground that it is based upon *one* important element of all core programs, namely, it deals with the values, knowledges, and skills needed by all for effective citizenship. In short, it is a way of organizing general education. Using the term to describe such programs is thus appropriate if the *type is designated and described as the authors have done*. Furthermore, it provides a good base from which to describe other types of programs that deviate from this conventional type of organization. In this way, various designs represent a continuum ranging from currently accepted practices<sup>4</sup> to those that represent sharp deviations from conventional practices.

**Evaluation** Many arguments are advanced in favor of the conventional subject-centered program of general education as described above. Some of the most important are these:

*First* and foremost, the separately taught subject program has the support of tradition; *second*, it lends itself to the preparation and use of

<sup>3</sup>In addition, the student would be required to choose between general mathematics and algebra in the ninth grade and between plane geometry and advanced algebra in the tenth grade. He would also be required to choose one year of science in addition to the required year of general science. Usually he would have the choice of biology, physics, or chemistry. These "group" requirements or "controlled" electives as they are sometimes called, do not fall within the authors' definition of general education, since choices are made upon the basis of special interests or needs of the student. They are thus more properly designated as non-vocational specialized-education subjects. They have the same status from the standpoint of curriculum design as foreign languages, specialized language arts (e.g., journalism, radio script writing, dramatics and similar subjects), advanced mathematics courses, and other subjects or fields which are also designed to meet the specialized interests or needs of the student.

<sup>4</sup>The number of schools having a *Type-One Core Program* in general education is not definitely known. However, a fairly accurate estimate may be deduced from various studies: Grace Wright, *Block-Time Classes and the Core Program in the Junior High School*, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Bulletin 1958, No. 6, Washington, D.C., U. S. Government Printing Office, 1958. Mrs. Wright found that 19 per cent of the junior and junior-senior high schools studied had some form of block-time programs, but in 68 per cent of those having block-time programs organized subjects were taught separately. This means that roughly 87 per cent of all of the high schools of the United States conform to the program described as *Type-One Core*. These findings are supported by Dale Knapp, *An Evaluative Study of Curriculum Changes in Ohio Secondary Schools*, Unpublished doctoral study, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1959. He found that only 13 per cent of Ohio high schools had block-time classes, and that most of those conformed to *Type-One Core* described above. This would mean that over 90 per cent of Ohio high schools have separate subject-centered programs in general education.

textbooks which have always been the backbone of instructional materials; *third*, it fits neatly into the scheme of the colleges and universities that have for the most part been the bulwark of the subject-centered approach; *fourth*, it lends itself very well to the current mood of measuring the "quality" of education through objective testing, the use of teaching machines, closed-circuit television involving previously prepared material presented to large groups of students, and the like; *fifth*, when separate subjects are taught in large blocks of time, it facilitates homeroom and guidance activities and helps teachers to become better acquainted with students; *sixth*, it lends itself readily to the so-called broken-front conception of curriculum development since segments of the curriculum may be examined and changed without much thought of general program development.

On the other hand, the following arguments have been advanced against the organized subject type of organization for general education: *first*, it is likely to be rather remote from the immediate felt needs and problems of youth; *second*, the necessarily limited scope and the pre-organized sequence make it difficult to meet adequately individual differences among students; *third*, because of the inherent rigidity of the content, democratic cooperative planning is difficult and seldom utilized extensively; *fifth*, mastery of subject matter tends to become the principal goal of education, rather than a means to the cultivation of the values of democracy.<sup>3</sup>

Type-two core, based upon correlation of two or more subjects  
*Within the framework of the organized subject-matter approach, it is possible to distinguish another type of organization which provides for correlation of subjects on a more or less systematic basis. In this type of program, teachers of two or more of the required subjects plan to show the interrelationships among the separate subjects. A simple illustration of this type is the correlation of courses in American Literature and American History. When the history teacher is dealing with a certain epoch of American history, the English teacher introduces the students to the literature of the period. A more formal organization to facilitate correlation is the "overarching theme" procedure. The teachers involved in giving instruction in two or more of the required subjects plan together to relate the teaching of their specialties to some broad theme such as "Living in the Community." Subjects are still taught separately but*

<sup>3</sup>For an elaboration of these advantages and disadvantages of the subject-centered approach, see Chapter V.

wherever possible relationships are shown to the overarching theme. The essence of this type of organization is a planned program for showing the relatedness of knowledge, but the subjects which are correlated are usually taught separately in single periods. Probably in most cases the subjects so correlated are English, social studies, and sometimes science. One of the best illustrations of the correlation type of core program is reported by Pierce.<sup>6</sup> The faculty of Wells High School (Chicago), of which he was then principal, chose the following centers of interest for grade 9A: Conservation of Cultural and Material Resources, Our Changing Methods of Production and Consumption, Government and Other Social Agencies in Cooperative Living, and Work in Relation to Daily Living. The following is the initial breakdown of one of the centers in terms of "unit leads . . . for the three major core fields":

### Social Studies

#### *How Conservation Improves Daily Living*

Learning objectives: To make effective use of our possessions and avoid needless waste.

Unit Elements: Why we should avoid waste, Obtaining and using capital; Need for conserving forests; Conserving fuels and other natural resources; Services of the Civilian Conservation Corps; Eliminating waste in child labor; Conservation through minimum hours and wage provisions; Eliminating waste through unemployment; Accident and retirement compensation; Conservation of school supplies and property.

### English Arts

#### *Conservation in the Development of American Civilization*

Learning objectives: To improve reading and expressional skills through the study of conservation needs in our country's development.

Unit Elements: How the pioneers used the forests—girdling; The destruction of buffalo and other game; Devastation of forests for timber and turpentine; Waste in past and present mining; Oil and other fuels in our country's growth; How Americans have made use of their land; Beginnings and growth of conservation movements.

### Science

#### *How Science Aids in Conserving Natural Resources*

Learning objective: To understand and appreciate better how science aids in preserving our natural and material possessions.

<sup>6</sup> Paul Pierce, *Developing a High-School Curriculum*, New York, The American Book Company, 1942, pp. 47 ff.



**Unit Elements** How science aids in conserving soils; Science and the protection of vegetation and livestock; Conserving the energy of air, water, and sunlight; How science is utilized to conserve our fuel supply.<sup>7</sup>

The general curriculum design at Wells which finally emerged retained the subject fields as the basis for the program, but these fields were related—or correlated—through the use of the following functions of living: (1) Ethical and spiritual character, (2) Work, (3) Leisure, (4) Thought and its communications, (5) Health, (6) Social relationships, and (7) Economic consciousness.<sup>8</sup>

More recently, the program of correlation has been developed through the utilization of a large time-block (two or three periods). When this is done, the correlated subjects are taught by one teacher who also has responsibilities for homeroom activities. As in *Type-One Core* the argument advanced for the large time-block arrangement is that it provides the opportunity to get better acquainted with the student. Then, too, it is held with considerable justification that correlation of subjects is more effective if the subjects involved are taught by the same teacher. Again, it should be pointed out that the time-block is an administrative device which does not alter the basic curriculum type. Curriculum content is still defined in terms of the scope and sequence of each subject. Where the large time-block is used, certain required subjects such as mathematics, science, and physical education are usually offered outside of the time-block.<sup>9</sup>

**Evaluation** This type of core program obviously tries to bridge the gap between the separately taught organized subject design and the experience-centered program. It undoubtedly helps to show the relatedness of knowledge. However, the correlated subjects retain their identity and hence the plan must be regarded as a somewhat modified organized-subject design.

**Type-three core**, based upon the fusion of two or more subjects. The practice of fusing elements within a field of knowledge has been going on for a long time. History, economics, sociology, and anthropology are often combined in a course and labelled "social studies" or "social living." Physics, chemistry, biology, nature study, etc., are commonly

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 134.

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of practices in block-time classes involving correlation, see Wright, *op. cit*, p. 10.

fused into general science courses taught in the junior high school, and sometimes into courses known as applied science in the senior high school. General language courses frequently combine the basic elements of Latin and several modern languages.

The fusion or combination of subjects representing *different* fields of knowledge is less common, but the principle involved is the same. Subject lines are obliterated or at least blurred and a new scope and sequence involving the subjects unified is developed. A simple illustration of a *Type-Three Core* program is the fusion of American history and American literature in the eleventh grade. Assuming that these subjects are required of all students, they meet the definition of general education developed earlier. These subjects, usually taught separately, are brought together in a large block of time—usually two consecutive periods. A favorite way of organizing the combined content is to divide the course into a series of epochs such as the Colonial Period, the Westward Movement, the Industrial Revolution, etc. The literature dealing with a particular epoch is studied along with the economic, social, and political aspects. English composition and spelling are taught functionally as tools for developing the basic understanding of the epoch. Some schools extend the block of time to three periods to provide sufficient time to bring in art, music, science, or other required subjects. A similar organization may be built around world history. Successive “culture epochs” are set up and these provide the vehicle for a study of civilizations and cultures in their various aspects. Since a culture involves all aspects of living, it is possible to draw upon several of the major fields of knowledge (e.g., language, arts, history, science, the fine and practical arts, music, and the like).

Another common vehicle for unifying several fields is to deal with a series of contemporary problems either as overarching themes or as units of work. For example, one school utilizes the theme *Understanding Ourselves and Others* as the basis for a program fusing social studies and the communication arts.

In Baltimore County, Maryland, the language arts and social studies are unified in grades seven, eight, and nine.

The core program organized for use in the Baltimore County schools develops subject matter content through a clearly defined but flexible scope and sequence based on structured problem areas which lend themselves to

integration and correlation. A central theme on each grade level unifies several subjects and provides the framework upon which the teacher may plan activities and learning experiences in a number of areas. These include history, geography, and civics in the social studies area; and listening, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, and literature in the English language arts. Areas of art and music are also included. The total program forms a cycle of learning experiences in the language arts and the social studies for the 3 years of junior high school.

*The Social Studies in the Core Program.*—The social studies area in the core program gives the pupil a unified cycle of social studies experience. On the first level he examines his national heritage. On the next he advances to a survey of the life and culture of people in the chief geographical divisions of the earth. On the third level he rounds out his junior high school program with a study of democratic citizenship. The seventh grade program is called *Our American Heritage*. The eighth grade is *Man's Interdependence in a Changing World*. The ninth grade program develops the theme *Developing Effective Democratic Citizenship*.

In the seventh grade the pupil makes a study of the development of the American nation. He examines the American way of life and comes to understand what forces determined the direction of our development. His knowledge of America's past helps him interpret the present national scene. He follows the great movements of today—the scientific advances, the technological developments, industrialization—and comes to understand that national security is dependent upon the interdependence and interrelationship of peoples and nations. He learns why America became a leader in world affairs and comes to recognize that the responsibility for such leadership is a challenge to all Americans.

In the eighth grade the pupil uses geography as the basis of his study of the interrelationship of man and the physical elements of his natural environment, the purpose being to develop a world point of view based on global patterns in a climatic-regional setting. This study of human geography places recurring emphasis upon man as he lives and works in a changing world. Man's reaction to his natural environment furnishes rich opportunity for the pupil to acquire an international understanding of the world's peoples, their needs and their problems and leads him to the conclusion that the more fortunate nations of the world have an obligation to work cooperatively with those who are less fortunate in an effort to solve common world problems.

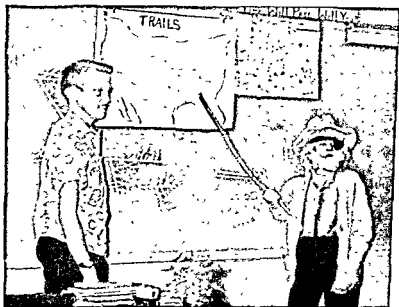
The ninth grade course of study develops the various aspects of citizenship through which the individual finds his own fullest realization and makes a maximum contribution to society. The pupil first tries to come to an understanding of himself in his relationships with others. A consideration of interpersonal relationships within small groups, such as are found in the

home or among members of the community, gives opportunity for the pupil to become aware of the socially desirable behavior patterns which he should strive to develop as a member of a group. He learns how the democratic citizen serves his county, state, and nation. The year's program includes an area on educational and vocational guidance in view of helping the pupil plan and direct his progress toward greater self-realization and more effective participation in society.

*Language Arts in the Core Problems.*—The core program provides an excellent opportunity for the functional development of language skills. The use of structured problem areas provides meaning and purpose for the development of skills in communication. Worthwhile activities with emphasis on ideas provide an avenue for the development of all language areas. In the core class the teacher participates as a guide in setting purposes, developing standards, gathering information, organizing materials and ideas, expressing ideas, evaluating progress, and setting new goals. Pupils engaged in these activities are led to recognize their own needs in the mechanical and technical phases of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Finally, the integration of language arts and social studies reinforces the values of both areas.

*Language Arts Not Related to the Core Problems.*—Neither teacher nor pupils must make the error of thinking that the work they do in the language arts in connection with the social studies comprises a total language arts program. Such treatment of the language arts as concomitant to the social studies must be unified and reinforced in a program developed outside of the social studies area of the program. Here the treatment of the language arts becomes more formalized, a balanced program being built around the weaknesses the class or individuals have shown during the correlated periods, and rounded out by other aspects of language outlined for the pupils.

Besides the many selections of literature and the mass media of communication studied during the language arts-social studies phase of the time block, the pupils during the year will make a study of literature independent



*Courtesy, Shawnee-Mission District High Schools*

of the core problems. These literary experiences deal with a wide variety of subjects and require careful and intensive reading of selections.<sup>10</sup>

This report is an excellent illustration of the *Type-Three Core*. Note that the themes for each grade serve as the basis for unifying the various elements of the language arts and social studies. In other words they are vehicles for teaching these subjects more effectively. Another good illustration of the *Type-Three Core* design is the program of the Shawnee-Mission High Schools. A recent bulletin provides a clear explanation of the program:<sup>11</sup>

Included in the unified studies program are a number of required and optional units for each grade. These resource units have been developed by committees of teachers and are to be used as guides for the work during the year. The following units have been designated for the various grades:

Units for Grade Seven include

*Required*

1. We Are the Junior High School
2. Let's Improve Our Communication with Others
3. How Do We Find Our Way About the World?
4. We Live in Many Communities
5. Living in Harmony with Myself and Others
6. What Is Science?
7. How Do Plants and Animals Grow?

*Optional*

1. How Does Weather Affect Us?
2. How Can I Use My Spare Time?
3. Rocks and Minerals
4. Colleges Elect Their Officials

Units for Grade Eight include

*Required*

1. Looking Ahead
2. Let's Improve Our Communications with Others
3. How Did the United States Become a Nation?
4. Westward Expansion and the Civil War
5. How Do We Govern Ourselves in a Democracy?

<sup>10</sup> *Developing Effective Democratic Citizenship*, Junior High School Curriculum Guide, Ninth Grade, Baltimore, Md., Baltimore County Public Schools, 1957, pp. 5-11, *passim*.

<sup>11</sup> *Introduction to the Unified Studies Program*, Merriam, Kansas, Shawnee-Mission District High Schools, 1959. (Mimeographed)

6. How Did the United States Become the Greatest Producer of Goods in the World?
7. How Can We Conserve Natural Resources?

*Optional*

1. How Can I Use My Spare Time?
  2. Insects
  3. Birds
  4. Citizens Elect Their Officials
  5. America, A Melting Pot of Nations
- Units for Grade Nine include:

*Required*

1. Looking Ahead
2. Let's Improve Our Communications with Others
3. Careers
4. Interdependence in a Shrinking World
5. The United Nations
6. Choose one or more of the following: Russia, South America, Africa, Western Europe, India, China, Others

*Optional*

1. What Can I Do to Promote a Better Life for All?
2. Money and Banking
3. How Can I Use My Spare Time?
4. My Part in the World of Books
5. Forming Public Opinion<sup>12</sup>

Accompanying this bulletin which sets forth the nature of the unified studies program is another<sup>13</sup> which sets forth in some detail the subject matter to be covered and in some cases the placement within the units. This subject matter is in outline form and is listed under the following headings; *Language Arts, Human Relations, General Understanding of Physical Phenomena, Social Studies, Health Education.*

It will be noted that this program has a considerably broader scope than the Baltimore County program in that it includes science and health education. The optional units suggest an even broader scope.

Like the types of core programs previously discussed, the *Type-Three Core* does not include all of general education, that is, all of the courses or subjects required of all students at a given level. Rarely does one find mathematics or science included among the subjects fused and, when

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4

<sup>13</sup> *Subject Matter Guide for Social Studies*, Merrian, Kansas, Shawnee-Mission High School District, 1960. (Mimeographed)

they are drawn upon, quite frequently such subjects are still required outside of the core time-block.

This type of core usually utilizes a large block of time (two or three periods) in the daily schedule and is taught in most schools by one broadly trained teacher, who may or may not draw upon subject-matter specialists to deal with the more technical phases of the unit or theme. Usually this teacher also serves as the homeroom teacher of a given group of students.

Since the *Type-Three Core* requires considerable curriculum reorganization, it is to be expected that fewer schools would be organized on this basis, and such seems to be the case. Wright reports<sup>14</sup> that only 20 per cent of the schools having block-time classes are of this type. On the basis of her sample, it is estimated that out of approximately 12,000 junior and junior-senior high schools in the United States, 2,300 of them have some type of block-time program, and 20 per cent of these schools (460) have unified or fused courses, as compared with 68 per cent (1464) of such schools having block-time classes described within the framework of *Types One and Two* core.

**Evaluation** An important point to keep in mind in appraising the *Type-Three Core* is that it does not abandon the teaching of the material usually included in the several required subjects. It simply unifies these materials in terms of certain established unifying concepts in order to make them more functional in the life of the learner. If the unifying themes are mere chronological periods in history, the gain is only that the different aspects of a given culture period are not fragmented—and perhaps this fact is sufficient to justify the program. If the unifying themes are real problems of living in America today, the gain may be very great, even though such themes are largely vehicles for teaching conventional subject matter.

Certainly such programs represent an advance over the designs of general education presented above if it is agreed that the criticisms of conventional programs of general education reviewed at the beginning of this chapter are valid.

*Type-four* core based upon common problems, needs, and interests of adolescents within a framework of problem areas Up to this point in the discussion, plans have been described that do not break sharply with the subject-centered program of general education. It will be noted

<sup>14</sup> Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 11.



that the *Type-Three Core* rejects the separate subject concept which dominates *Types One* and *Two*, but it does not abandon the notion that the major content for general education is to be found in the material usually taught through separate subjects.

The *Type-Four Core*, though it draws heavily upon organized subject matter, finds its basic orientation in the common needs, problems, and interests of the learner, rather than in the organized disciplines.

The program is based upon the conviction that the high school should make a direct attack upon the common problems which youths in our society face and that it should help them to identify and meet their common needs. Subject matter from all pertinent fields of knowledge is drawn upon to illuminate, clarify, and provide data for solving persistent common problems of living. No preconceived bodies of subject matter are set up to be "covered." If particular subject matter is needed to achieve the goals set up, it will come in—otherwise it is left out. From one-third to two-thirds of the school day is set aside for this part of the curriculum. The remaining time is devoted to instruction in specialized areas (see Chapter VII) elected by students on the basis of their particular interests and needs. In practice, mathematics and physical education are usually required of all students in addition to the two- or three-hour block of time devoted to broad comprehensive common problems of living. Studies of the possible contributions to the core of these two areas have been made. One such study indicates the possibility of the abandonment of mathematics as a required subject on the ground that the mathematics needed as a part of the general education program might be taught instrumentally within the time-block allotted to the core.<sup>15</sup>

Within the time-block allotted to the core, the teacher performs several functions. He has charge of homeroom and guidance activities. He develops units of work cooperatively with his class and provides for remedial instruction when needed.

The scope of the *Type-Four Core* is defined by *problem areas* based upon the immediate, felt, and predicated common problems, needs, and interests of students.<sup>16</sup> The problem areas represent categories in which most adolescents have persistent problems and needs.

It is fairly common practice for schools using the problem area ap-

<sup>15</sup> See Elsie J. Alberty, "The Role of Mathematics in Core-Program Development," *The School Review* LXIV, 300-306 (October, 1956).

<sup>16</sup> For a discussion of the procedures for determining problem areas, see Chapter VIII.

proach to develop through teacher teams one or more resource units<sup>17</sup> dealing with each of the problem areas. These are utilized by the teacher in developing units of work in the classroom.

If the problem areas have been properly developed they represent an analysis of the common problems which adolescents face now and are likely to face in the future and as such make up the structure of general education. What, if anything, is *required* outside the core-time-block would depend upon the situation in a particular school, and to the depth of the analysis of common problems.

The sequence of units of work derived from the problem areas would be determined by the policy of the school. In some schools the problem areas are used by the teachers as a guide rather than as a mandate. In others, the sequence may be relatively fixed. For example, in the Fairmont Heights High School, Prince George's County, Md., the scope and sequence constitute the "structure" of the core program. However, teachers are free to depart from the structure *if problems arise of such significance that the teacher and students feel that they should be dealt with at once*. The following is a description of the core program at the Fairmont Heights High School at the junior high school level:

A continuous curriculum development program has been carried on in the school since its opening in September 1950. The faculty, in looking at the general education program, decided upon the problem area framework as the basis for the organization of the core program. The problem areas were defined in terms of the common needs, problems, and personal-social interests of boys and girls. Many different devices were used in gathering the data, such as (1) community studies, (2) results of standardized tests, (3) interest inventories, (4) conferences, and (5) survey of the literature pertinent to adolescent growth and development. The problem areas "pegged" for the junior high school are:

*Seventh Grade: Problems of—*

School Living

Personal and Community Health with emphasis on personal health

Intercultural Relations

Economic Relations

*Eighth Grade: Problems of—*

School Living

<sup>17</sup> For a resource unit entitled *Exploring Values with Teenagers*, see Chapter XII.

Self Understanding  
World Peace  
Conservation of Natural Resources  
Home and Family Living

*Ninth Grade: Problems of—*

School Living  
Finding Values by Which We Live  
Democratic Government (Processes and Development)  
Communication in a Contemporary World  
Vocations and Employment<sup>15</sup>

The Wright study quoted above did not extend to the senior high schools, but a communication from the principal to the authors reveals that the program of the senior high school follows the same pattern. It is as follows:

*Tenth Grade: Problems of—*

1. School Living
2. Community Health
3. Understanding and Appreciating the Heritage of Early Civilizations
4. Understanding and Appreciating the Transitions to Modern Times
5. *Intercultural Relations*

*Eleventh Grade: Problems of—*

1. School Living
2. Understanding and Appreciating the American Heritage
3. Family Living
4. Communication

*Twelfth Grade: Problems of—*

1. School Living
2. Securing and Maintaining World Peace
3. Economic Relationships
4. Conserving Human Resources
5. Finding Values by Which We Live

How prevalent is the *Type-Four Core*? It is somewhat difficult to give a complete answer to this question because of the confusion which exists with respect to the nature and extent of structuring. Perhaps the

<sup>15</sup>Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 17, from a statement prepared by G. James Gholson, Principal.

best evidence on this point is to be found in the Wright study referred to repeatedly in this chapter. She estimates that out of approximately 12,000 junior and junior-senior high schools in the United States, 2,300 have block-time classes, and six per cent (about 140) meet the specification of the *Type-Four Core*.

**Evaluation** The various types of core programs (*Types Two and Three*) presented earlier are regarded as transitional in character. They may be regarded as bridges to cross from the extreme, relatively ineffective systematic subject approach to general education to a program such as the *Type-Four Core*, which is based on the persistent common needs and problems of youth. In the judgment of the authors, the *Type-Four Core* is the most promising curriculum design for transforming general education in the high school into a program suited to the challenging times. It has these advantages:

1. It makes possible a direct attack upon the needs of youth and the problems which beset them in our present-day confused culture. The traditional program is based upon the assumption that once young people have gained some degree of mastery of the so-called fundamental subjects—English, history, science, and mathematics—they will then be able to cope successfully with their problems. The program under discussion reverses the process. Common problems of youth are identified; they are studied intensively, drawing upon appropriate subject matter, and solutions are reached by the use of individual and group thinking. The so-called fundamentals are learned functionally, and there is plenty of evidence to support the conclusion that such learning is more effective.

2. It provides an effective means of bridging the gap between education and guidance, between the curriculum and the extra-curriculum, between general and special-interest education. Homeroom activities, and individual and group guidance become an integral part of the educative process as the teacher and students go about the solving of problems. Likewise, many of the informal student activities, class and school business, clubs and organizations are absorbed in the block of time devoted to the core, or general education. Special interests of students are cultivated in the core up to the point where laboratories and studios and specialized instruction are needed.

3. It tends to break down the class barriers which so frequently are maintained in the traditional program. The use of broad, comprehensive

units of work make possible provision for individual differences in abilities and in rates of learning, thus obviating the necessity for sectioning, or ability grouping. Students of all social and economic levels work together in the solving of common problems, thus exemplifying democratic living at its best.

4. It facilitates the unification of knowledge. Subjects are no longer taught in watertight compartments. Problems of living refuse to be strait-jacketed into logically organized systems of knowledge. Inter-relationships among subjects and fields are established as the various disciplines are drawn upon as needed.

5. It is consistent with the newer theories of learning and transfer. For the most part traditional instruction is based upon the atomistic approach to learning. On the other hand, the core, with its emphasis upon broad comprehensive units of work and vital problems of living, stresses the organismic approach. *Transfer of training* takes place through the enrichment of meanings and their use in a wide variety of life situations.

6. It encourages the teaching staff to plan and work together. In the compartmentalized program of general education, each teacher works more or less in isolation from his fellows. The English teachers have no need to cooperate with the social studies or science teachers. Each group plans its own program out of relationship with the others. Such situations cannot exist in the type of program which we are considering. Teachers of *all* areas have contributions to make and have a stake in the outcome. If it is to be successful, such contributions must be elicited and utilized. Thus, the teaching staff must work together as a whole.

7. It encourages the use of democratic practices in the classroom. The subject-centered program, with its fixed quotas of subject matter to be mastered, is not conducive to teacher-student planning. Really, there is little about which to plan! The problem-centered approach changes the scene completely. The student has a role in identifying problems, in planning the attacks upon them, and in evaluating the effectiveness of the work. These practices are the essence of the democratic process.

8. It encourages the use of the community as a laboratory for learning. The common problems of youth grow out of the interaction of the student and his immediate and wider environment. They do not exist "under the skin" of the individual. Problems of home and family living, for example, cannot be isolated from the environmental conditions surrounding the home. Thus the classroom takes on the character of a

meeting place for planning the attack on the problems. The activities of the students, as they go about discovering pertinent data, are bound to take the class out into the community. Incidentally, the large block of time set aside for the core makes such community exploration possible without encroaching upon the time allotted to other school activities.

9. It makes it possible for teachers to reduce materially the student loads which they are required to carry in a traditional program. Loads of 175 students per day are not uncommon. Obviously the teacher who carries two core groups of three periods each would have only one-third as many different students per day as the teacher who handles six separate classes. The core organization, in cutting down the student load, makes it possible for teachers to know students more intimately and hence to guide them more effectively.

Why, if this type of core program has so much to commend it, are so few schools employing it? The reasons are not hard to find. Among the most important are these:

1. The program represents a radical departure from the organized subject approach. To develop such a program, a school needs to utilize a great deal of time and energy.

2. It requires a plan for complete program development rather than the now popular "broken front" attack on specific problems.

3. It is criticized by conservative educators as being too radical and by "progressive" educators as being too fixed. They object to the structuring of problem areas.

4. It is difficult to find appropriate resource materials to be utilized in place of the conventional textbook.

5. There is a fairly widespread, though unfounded, belief that such a program neglects the "fundamentals."

6. It is difficult to secure teachers with sufficiently broad training to undertake such a program.

Type-five core, based on teacher-student planned activities without reference to any formal structure. The discussion of the *Type-Four Core* program should have made clear the point that there are wide differences in practice in the use of the structured problem areas. In some programs the problem areas actually determine all of the learning units developed in the classroom. At the other extreme, the problem

areas might be regarded as suggestive. The next logical step would be to eliminate problem areas entirely, leaving the choice of learning activities exclusively to the teacher and his group of students.

In such a program, criteria as to what constitutes a satisfactory unit of work are usually developed cooperatively. Proposals of units or problems are made by the students and teacher. These proposals are evaluated in terms of the criteria, and decisions are made. The actual "design" of the program could be determined only by a record of what had been undertaken at each grade level during the course of the year.

The argument for such a program is very simple. The teacher and students are most competent to determine the common needs of the particular group and hence to determine the learning activities best suited to meet these needs. Structuring the program in advance is just another way of imposing subject matter. The group process of determining problems, goals, and ways of working is more important than the actual subject matter that makes up the program.

Some so-called progressive elementary schools are organized upon this basis. It is impossible to find any design or structure in the program. This does not mean that there are no agreed-upon values or objectives, or that teachers are not sensitive to the need for developing certain recognized skills of living. It does mean, however, that no design for meeting common needs is set up in advance. A structured design is held not to be necessary by those who advocate this type of program. Perhaps it would be fair to say that they consider *process* values to be more important than content values.<sup>19</sup>

It is unlikely that very many high schools are organized exclusively on the basis of a *Type-Five Core*, even though the Wright study previously referred to reports that six per cent of the schools having block-time classes are organized on this basis. This would mean that about 140

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, the following references: William H. Kilpatrick, *Remaking the Curriculum*, New York, Newson and Company, 1936; L. Thomas Hopkins, *Integration, Its Meaning and Application*, New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1937; Gertrude Noar, *Freedom to Live and Learn*, Philadelphia, Franklin Publishing Company, 1948; Roland Faunce and Nelson Bossing, *Developing the Core Curriculum*, Revised Edition, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1958. See especially Chapter VI, "A Core Class in Action," by Rosalind Zapf. See also a film strip prepared by Zapf entitled, "A Core Class in Action," produced and distributed by Wayne University College of Education, Detroit, Michigan, 1948, and her book entitled: *Democratic Processes in the Classroom*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959.

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junior and junior-senior high schools have unstructured experience-centered core programs.<sup>29</sup>

It is possible to find individual teachers in high schools operating on this basis. For example, a number of schools have provided administratively for a double or triple period for meeting common needs, giving wide discretion to the teachers as to what shall be taught. In such a school some teachers will teach traditional subject matter, say English, history, and science, in successive periods; some will correlate these subjects; some will fuse them on the basis of contemporary problems or culture epochs; some will set up their own individual problem areas; still others will discard all preconceived subject matter and base units of work upon the immediate felt needs of students. Thus, the same school might illustrate all of the types of core programs which we have discussed. Needless to say, such a school cannot be said to have a program design. This chaotic situation may explain the relatively large number of schools having this type of program reported in the Wright study.

**Evaluation** The proponents of this type of program claim that:

1. It provides more effectively for teacher-student planning.
2. It is consistent with democratic processes which call for freedom of choice, personal and social responsibility, and the like.
3. It is based squarely on the immediate and felt needs of the learner and hence is likely to be more interesting to him.
4. It is an exemplification of learning as a dynamic rather than a passive process.

On the other hand the following charges have been brought against it:

1. It ignores the fact that it is possible to establish with a degree of definiteness the broad areas of adolescent needs and problems.
2. It is extremely difficult to secure any continuity of learning because of the emphasis upon process.
3. It neglects to utilize the personnel resources of the school in determining the scope of the general education program.
4. It leaves parents and subject-matter specialists in a state of con-

<sup>29</sup> Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 15. For more evidence on this point, see: Nelson L. Bossing and John F. Kaufman, "Block-Time or Core Practices in Minnesota Secondary Schools," *The Clearing House*, XXXII, 532-537 (May, 1958). These investigators found only two *Type-Five Core* programs in Minnesota; see also Knapp, *op. cit.*, p. 200. In this study of Ohio high schools, only one such program was found.

fusion as to the nature and purposes of the activities that take place in the time-block.

This program satisfies those educators who emphasize almost exclusively "group processes" in education and hold that any predetermined curricular pattern violates the dynamic nature of the individual and of learning. On the other hand, it is far too tenuous and opportunistic to satisfy most teachers, administrators, and communities. In a small school where teachers could meet frequently and plan informally in terms of a well-understood and accepted system of values, the plan might operate successfully. It is, however, unlikely that many high schools will adopt this type of program in the near future.

**The future of core programs** We have completed our analysis of possible designs for general education in the high school. These designs represent a continuum from the conventionally organized programs that have been in effect for a long time to designs that require fundamental reorganization. What chance is there that such fundamental reorganization is likely to take place in the decade ahead? Among many others there are two factors which are now having, and in the foreseeable future are likely to have, a profound effect upon the design of the general education program in the high school. The *first* is the trend toward the emphasis upon the so-called academic disciplines as the basis of curriculum organization. This was discussed at some length in the previous chapter. If this trend continues—and there is every reason to believe that it will, so long as the threat of Soviet technological supremacy exists—the only curriculum designs among those discussed in this chapter that are possible are Types One, Two, and Three, where subjects retain their identity within or without a time block, but even Types Two and Three are not likely to flourish in the face of the strong demand that the required subjects be taught by specialists. Conant, with his prestige as a distinguished scientist and educator, recommends<sup>21</sup> that block-time classes be eliminated above the seventh grade. They are considered by him to be a transition from the self-contained elementary program to the

<sup>21</sup> James B. Conant, *Education in the Junior High School Years*, Princeton, N.J., Educational Testing Service, 1960. In this connection the reader may want to examine a report in quite a different key: Jean Grambs, Clarence G. Noyce, Franklin Patterson, and John C. Robertson, *The Junior High School We Need*, Report of the ASCD Commission on Secondary Curriculum, Washington, D.C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA, 1961.

highly departmentalized subject-centered program of the high school, of which he approves. The reason for this concession is "to enable the teacher to know his pupils well because he has fewer of them."<sup>22</sup> This teacher must be *equally* qualified to teach English and social studies. If these recommendations are carried out, block-time classes will disappear from the general education program above the seventh-grade level.

The *second* factor which is already influencing the general education program is ability grouping. This, of course, is not a new concept. It came into being with the emphasis upon "scientific" education in the early Twenties. By the early Thirties it began to decline because the evidence of its effectiveness was, to say the least, not conclusive, and the disadvantages seemed to outweigh the advantages. As late as 1957 Wrightstone,<sup>23</sup> after reviewing the literature, concludes that "variability in achievement in grades that have three ability groups in each is about 83 per cent as great as in normally organized groups. . . . Because there are wide differences even in a so-called ability group class and because it is difficult to avoid labeling classes as bright, average or slow, homogeneous grouping has been used less widely in recent years than it was two decades ago. *There have developed both teaching methods and materials that permit more successful adaptations to a fairly wide range of ability within a class.*"<sup>24</sup> This conclusion was reached at about the time Conant began his study of the high school.<sup>25</sup> The decline of which Wrightstone speaks has been reversed into a marked trend, probably because of the present emphasis upon preparing "academically talented" students for service to the State.<sup>26</sup>

Certainly the Conant report on the high school has contributed to the present revival of ability grouping. He offers no proof for his strong conviction of the desirability of sectioning students in all required subjects except "American Problems" on the basis of academic ability. As

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background for this recommendation it is interesting to note his comments:

Ability grouping is a highly controversial subject among administrators and teachers. I have met competent teachers who argued vigorously for heterogeneous grouping in all classes, that is to say, they argued that students of widely different academic abilities and reading skills should be in the same class. Other teachers were equally certain that justice cannot be done to either the bright student or the slow reader if both receive instruction in the same class. Some of those who feel that heterogeneous grouping is a mistake advocate across-the-board grouping or tracking. Others advocate grouping of students according to their ability in the subject in question.<sup>27</sup>

For some unexplained reason, Conant gives vigorous support to the group who favor grouping by subjects. His specific recommendation follows:

In the required subjects and those elected by students with a wide range of ability, the students should be grouped according to ability, subject by subject. For example, in English, American history, ninth-grade algebra, biology and physical science, there should be at least three types of classes—one for the more able in the subject, another for the large group whose ability is about average, and another for the slow reader who should be handled by special teachers. The middle group might be divided into two or three sections according to the students' abilities in the subject-in-question.<sup>28</sup>

If this recommendation is carried out, and it is likely to be in many school systems, it precludes the possibility of conceiving of a design for general education that breaks with the organized subject tradition. The time-block disappears from the high-school program. And what takes the place of the program for developing the *common* ideals, understandings, and skills, needed by all for effective citizenship? Recognizing the need for "mutual respect and understanding between different types of students," Conant recommends a required course in "American Problems" or "American Government," which would represent a cross section of students of all levels of ability. As to content, he has this to say:

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"Current topics should be included; free discussion of controversial issues should be encouraged" and then he adds significantly: "This approach is one significant way in which our schools distinguish themselves from those in totalitarian nations. This course, as well as well-organized homerooms and certain student activities, can contribute a great deal to the development of future citizens of our democracy who will be intelligent voters, stand firm under trying national conditions and not be beguiled by the oratory of those who appeal to special interests."<sup>29</sup>

It appears to the authors that the faith which Conant has in *one course* out of a total of eighteen or twenty required for graduation, in homerooms, and in certain student activities is, to say the least, naive. At any rate, the proposed program of grouping by subjects in all required (general-education) academic courses not only eliminates the time-block but also precludes the possibility of building a general-education program on the basis of *common* needs, problems, and interests of adolescents.<sup>30</sup>

#### WHAT DOES RESEARCH SAY ABOUT THE SUCCESS OF CORE PROGRAMS?

One of the authors made a fairly comprehensive study of the research in the field of core programs<sup>31</sup> and reached the following conclusions:

The research dealing with the effectiveness of core programs suffers from the same confusion which surrounds the meaning of the term, core. Frequently investigators assume erroneously that the core concept means the same thing in all situations, and neglect to define clearly the concept which is being studied. Another difficulty is that teachers within the same school may hold widely different conceptions of the core program. As a result, conclusions derived from research studies need to be interpreted with great caution. . .

It may be concluded from the reported research on the effectiveness of the core program that few significant differences have been found to exist

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.

<sup>30</sup> See: Earl W. Harmer, "Le Mort de Core," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLII, 67 (November, 1960) for an interesting view of the future of the "core." And for an appraisal of the Conant contribution to education by the leader of the reconstructionist movement see: Theodore Brameld, *Education for the Emerging Age: New Ends and Stronger Means*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1961, Chapter V, entitled: "Education in the Conservative Mood."

<sup>31</sup> Harold Alberty, "Core Programs," in *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, Third Edition, pp. 337-341. Copyright 1960 by The Macmillan Company, New York, used with their permission.



between student achievement as measured by objective tests in core programs and other types of curricular organization. On the other hand, it may also be concluded that students in core programs make satisfactory progress in attaining objectively measurable goals. In the area of attitudes and values, there is fairly good evidence to indicate that a core program, organized in terms of common needs and problems of adolescents, is distinctly superior to the conventional subject-centered program. There are at least two possible explanations of these results that need further study. First, the results may be due to the fact that satisfactory means are not now available for determining the relative values of the two types of programs. Second, under actual operating conditions the core program may not be distinctively different from the conventional program. The core teacher, whose preparation has probably been directed toward subject matter values, may still hold to these values and emphasize them in his teaching. Likewise, the insistence on the part of the administrators and the public that more stress be placed on the mastery of the fundamentals may result in minimizing the difference between the two types of programs. The available research seems to indicate a distinct superiority of the core program, defined in terms of a large time block devoted to common needs, problems and interests of students, over the conventional programs, in providing for more effective guidance of students; for individual differences among students, and for more effective use of community resources in the classroom.<sup>32</sup>

## SUMMARY

From the survey and evaluation of the various designs of the general-education program in the high school, a number of conclusions may be drawn:

1. The logically organized subject program of general education persists in the vast majority of high schools of the United States.
2. There is a significant trend toward block-time classes in the junior high school, but in most of these classes, the subjects are still taught separately with little or no correlation.
3. Block-time classes with or without correlation or fusion are often regarded as a transition from the self-contained elementary classroom to the departmentalized program of the senior high school.
4. Block-time classes with or without correlation or fusion do not change significantly the content of general education. They do, however, make it possible for teachers to become better acquainted with students and as a result to guide them more wisely.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 339-340.

5. Experience or problem-centered core programs (*Types Four and Five*) are rather rare and are likely to become more so, if the present pressures that are operating upon the schools persist.

6. In actual practice, it is difficult to identify particular schools with specific types of design except in the case of the strictly subject-centered programs that employ no time-blocks. In other cases, schools vary from grade to grade, from teacher to teacher within the same grade, and in the day-to-day work of the individual teacher. This is especially true where the time-block is employed as an *administrative device*. Some teachers may use the time-block to teach the *same material* they would deal with if there were no time-block. Others may develop experience-centered units with complete disregard for subject lines. At other times these same teachers may "cover ground" by daily textbook assignments.

7. Research studies are difficult to interpret, but there is considerable evidence to support the conclusion that *Core Types Three and Four* have many advantages over *Core Types One and Two*, especially in the areas of attitudes and values.

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5. Experience or problem-centered core programs (*Types Four and Five*) are rather rare and are likely to become more so, if the present pressures that are operating upon the schools persist.

6. In actual practice, it is difficult to identify particular schools with specific types of design except in the case of the strictly subject-centered programs that employ no time-blocks. In other cases, schools vary from grade to grade, from teacher to teacher within the same grade, and in the day-to-day work of the individual teacher. This is especially true where the time-block is employed as an *administrative device*. Some teachers may use the time-block to teach the *same material* they would deal with if there were no time-block. Others may develop experience-centered units with complete disregard for subject lines. At other times these same teachers may "cover ground" by daily textbook assignments.

7. Research studies are difficult to interpret, but there is considerable evidence to support the conclusion that *Core Types Three and Four* have many advantages over *Core Types One and Two*, especially in the areas of attitudes and values.

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## *Curriculum Designs for Specialized Education*



IN THE PREVIOUS chapter an analysis was made of a number of designs for the *general-education* program in the high school. It was pointed out that the role of general education is to provide a program specifically geared to the task of providing educational experiences to meet the *common* problems and needs of the student, and to develop the values, understandings, and skills needed by all for effective democratic citizenship. It was also pointed out that the general-education program should provide for individual differences in abilities, needs, and interests up to the point at which specialized activities are best carried on by individuals or groups in a specialized environment. An implication of the above function of general education is that students should be grouped heterogeneously, thereby representing all segments of the community and all differences in social, economic, political, and religious background. This the school should do to fulfill the democratic commitment of promoting greater unity in our culture.

This facet of the curriculum in common practice usually utilizes about one-half of the student's time during a four or six-year program, depending on the organization of the school. This means that out of the 16 or 18 units of a four-year program, eight or nine would be devoted to general education. Whether these requirements are defined in terms of subjects, fields of knowledge, or areas of living, or some combination of them, the time allotment is much the same. A point to remember is that some authority—the administration, the teaching staff, the legislature, the board of education, the state department of education, laymen,



students, or some combination of these groups—decides what courses, experiences, and the like, are essential for *all* students for effective citizenship. The next chapter deals with some of the problems involved in making these important decisions.

The remaining part of the students' time is given over to the second facet of the total curriculum—*specialized* education. The experiences, courses, or activities in specialized education should be of two kinds: non-vocational and vocational. The present chapter deals with this facet of the curriculum.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SPECIALIZED-EDUCATION PROGRAM IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

General education and specialized education are two interrelated facets of a good program of high-school education. They are not, as is sometimes believed, at war with each other. Democratic education is equally concerned with both facets. The survival of our democracy depends upon the development of citizens who have common understandings, common ways of behaving, and common outlooks on life. *But democratic education also recognizes that the strength of a democracy lies in the cultivation of the uniqueness of each citizen.* It is only when the cultivated talents of each individual are utilized for the common good that democracy functions at its best.

*It follows then that the school needs to give special attention to the nature of the program which it provides for meeting the special needs of students and groups.*

### SPECIALIZED OFFERINGS IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

High schools have for a long time given a good deal of attention to this part of the curriculum. When schools operated in terms of faculty psychology and formal discipline, it was not necessary to give much attention to the problem—for one subject was held to be as good as another, but that was a long time ago. During the past three or four decades the offerings of the high school have increased enormously—and most of the increased offerings have been in the area of electives designed to meet the needs of particular groups of students. Even a casual survey of the course offerings in high schools throughout the

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country indicates a vast array of courses in each of the major areas of knowledge. For example, in the field of *English*, in addition to the usual required offerings are listed Speech and Public Speaking, Dramatic Arts, Debate, Radio Speaking and Broadcasting, Journalism, Creative Writing, World Literature, Bible, Remedial English, Penmanship, Mythology, Stagecraft, and Theater Arts. In the field of the *social studies*, in addition to the usual requirements of American History, Civics, and Problems of Democracy, are listed: Occupations, Orientation, Latin-American History, State History, Ancient, Medieval, and Modern World History, World Geography, American Geography, International Relations, Economics, Sociology, Psychology, Consumer Education, Preparental Education, Human Relations, Family Education, Guidance, and Effective Living. *Science* has been proliferated to embrace such subjects as Aeronautics, Electricity, Radio (including electronics), Conservation, Photography, Anatomy, and Related Shop Science. In the arts areas, the expansion is even more striking. The usual non-vocational *industrial arts* courses are augmented by printing, electrical work, handicrafts, automobile mechanics, home mechanics, ceramics, industrial arts mathematics, and driver education. With the increased emphasis on foreign languages, it is not surprising that a wide variety of courses should be offered in this area. The following courses are given in some public schools for some students: Spanish, Latin, French, German, Italian, Hebrew, Greek, Polish, Portuguese, Swedish, Norse, Bohemian, Russian, and General foreign language.<sup>1</sup>

In *mathematics*, as might be expected, a wide variety of offerings are found in addition to the usual offerings in Algebra, Plane and Solid Geometry, and General Mathematics. Among the specialized mathematics courses are Trigonometry, Analytical Geometry, Statistics, Advanced Placement Mathematics, Calculus, Business Mathematics, Consumer Mathematics, and Mathematics in Life.

In the field of vocational education within the comprehensive high

<sup>1</sup> For statistics on the foreign languages being taught in elementary schools, see Stanley Levenson, "The Current Status of FLIES Teaching in the United States," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLII, 265-268 (March, 1961). This report indicates that some school systems begin foreign language instruction in the kindergarten. Needless to say, the number of elementary schools teaching foreign languages is increasing rapidly. Probably well over 500,000 elementary students are now enrolled in foreign-language classes. In some schools a particular foreign language is required. In others, only the bright students are included in the program.

school the offerings are equally impressive. Space forbids more than a few sample listings. Keller reports<sup>2</sup> that in one school, The Arsenal Technical High School of Indianapolis, courses are offered in the following vocational fields: Airplane and Engine Mechanics, Auto Mechanics, Body and Fender Repair, Bookkeeping, Cabinet Making, Carpentry, Commercial Art, Commercial Cooking, Commercial Sewing, Architectural Drafting, Machine Drafting, Electricity, Electronics, Foundry Practice, Music-Band, Music-Orchestra, Music-Vocal, Painting and Decorating, Pattern Making, Plumbing, Printing, Radio, Refrigeration, Retail Selling, Secretarial Training, Sheet Metal, Sign Painting, Welding and Forging.<sup>3</sup>

Also, to help meet the specialized needs of students, should be listed the co-curricular, or "extracurricular" activities which are designed to supplement and extend the formal course offerings. Literally hundreds of activities, ranging from student councils to honor societies, are to be found in secondary schools. Many are "clubs" that are closely related to the formal curriculum. For example, related to English and speech are "Booklovers, Debate, Dramatics (under many names), Forum, Library, Parliamentary Law, Poetry, Short Story, and Writers Clubs."<sup>4</sup>

This proliferation of courses and activities in the high school is one of the most striking phenomena of public education today, and with the accelerated extension of knowledge and the resulting fragmentation in terms of highly specialized facets there seems to be no prospect of a reversal of the trend, unless the highly articulate group of Essentialists succeed in their efforts to cut back the elective program of "practical" subjects in order to make more room for the academic disciplines—and this is not likely to happen.

*Some factors responsible for increased offerings* The present situation with respect to increased offerings didn't "just happen." It is the result of powerful forces, some of which are these:

<sup>2</sup> Franklin J. Keller, *The Comprehensive High School*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1955.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 476. Note: Arsenal Technical High School is classified as a comprehensive high school.

<sup>4</sup> See Edgar G. Johnston and Roland Faunce, *Student Activities in Secondary Schools*, New York, The Ronald Press Company, 1952, pp. 121-22; and for a report of the research in this field, see Roland C. Faunce, "Extra-Curricular Activities," in *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, Third Edition, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1960, pp. 506-510.

to our society. Most of the controversy centers in the comprehensive high school *versus* separate schools for the academically gifted and for those students who will enter some occupation at the termination of the high school program. Concerning special schools for the handicapped and the socially maladjusted there is little difference of opinion. Most educators would agree that the public high schools should provide for such youth within the regular school program, if it is at all possible to do so, but they would *also* agree that for many youths in this category, this becomes impossible and that some sort of institution, providing custodial care and the best possible opportunities for learning, is a necessity at least until society finds a better answer.

The comprehensive vs. the specialized high school Regardless of our beliefs on this issue, in the foreseeable future most American high schools will continue to be of the comprehensive type for the simple reason that communities are too small to provide diversified schools even if they want to do so. Attempts at consolidation, many of them successful, may ultimately change the situation—but, as of now, the comprehensive high school plays the leading role in secondary education. The controversy, then, involves the large districts which because of large student populations and adequate resources may move in the direction of comprehensiveness or of specialization in types of high schools.

There are many who believe that the comprehensive high school, which at its best provides for the needs—common and specialized—of all youth, is more congenial to our democratic tradition and values than is the specialized high school which has always characterized European education. They see the European system of separating the academically gifted from the students of less ability at a very early age and requiring them to attend specialized schools as a curtailment of opportunity, and hence, as essentially undemocratic.

James B. Conant has long been a champion of the comprehensive high school. Since he has been very influential in education for many years, his comments are quoted as follows:

... generalization about American public education is highly dangerous. . . . I believe it is accurate to state that a high school accommodating all of the youth of the community is typical of American education. I think it is safe to say that the comprehensive high school is characteristic of our society and further that *it has come into being because of our economic*

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history and our devotion to the ideals of equality of opportunity and equality of status.<sup>17</sup>

The case for the comprehensive high school is probably best stated in a Report of the ASCD Commission on the Education of Adolescents. Speaking for the commission, Wiles and Franklin<sup>18</sup> state the position as follows:

*The secondary school should be a comprehensive school. If a major task of the public school system of America is to develop the basic values of a free society and mutual respect for the range of persons and groups within our diverse culture, students must have an opportunity to live and work together. The comprehensive secondary school is an essential element in the development of a common viewpoint sufficiently strong to hold our nation together. If specialized high schools which divide the population along social and economic lines were substituted for comprehensive high schools, it would further the division that exists among groups and decrease the possibility of maintaining and developing the qualities that unite us as a free people.<sup>19</sup>*

There are those who argue that the specialized high school, directing its efforts toward a single purpose with a group of students selected in terms of that purpose, can do a better job of meeting the needs of the group. Within narrow limits, this is probably true. However, looking at the problem of developing unity in our society in terms of common values and understandings, it would seem that the school that works with a cross section of youth has the better opportunity to contribute to the American ideal. Specialized schools—academic or vocational—are likely to be a divisive influence in American education since student bodies tend to form along class lines. Of course, the comprehensive high school does not automatically overcome this objection. In the large cities, where the population is likely to be segmented in terms of socioeconomic classes, even the neighborhood comprehensive high school may perpetuate the existing class structure. It is possible, too, that the comprehensive high school may, within itself, be so organized as to reflect the class structure of the community—but more about this later.

<sup>17</sup> James B. Conant, *The American High School Today*. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959, p. 8. (Italics added.)

<sup>18</sup> Kimball Wiles and Franklin Patterson, *The High School We Need*, Washington, D.C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA, 1959.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.



## PROVIDING SPECIALIZED EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL

Since most of the high schools of the United States are, in intent and purpose at least, of the comprehensive type, we shall center our discussion of the internal organization for providing specialized education upon such high schools, though much of the discussion would be appropriate for other types—particularly the academic high schools.

There are several recognized practices for providing appropriate specialized education within the comprehensive high school. Among them are these: (1) elective courses, (2) ability grouping, (3) multiple tracking, (4) acceleration, (5) special courses and advanced seminars for the talented, and (6) advanced placement.

A prerequisite to the success of any of these is a sound guidance program made up of classroom teachers who know their students and counselors who are familiar with the techniques of assessment of traits, abilities, interests, and needs of students. In the discussion which follows we shall assume that the school has a good guidance program.

**Providing for specialized education through the elective program**  
We have already discussed the wide range of offerings of elective programs and student activities offered in the various schools of the United States. In schools that are sufficiently large<sup>20</sup> and financially able to do so, it is possible to build a rich program of elective courses: courses designed for those who expect to enter college and some further special courses for those who expect to enter upon *specialized* college programs, e.g., engineering, the arts; courses of a non-vocational nature designed to stimulate and enrich special interests of students; prevocational and vocational courses designed for those students who expect to terminate their formal education at the end of the high school period, or for those who, in all probability, will drop out of school at age 16 years; and a rich program of student activities including clubs closely related to the formal course work.

Are the provisions suggested above adequate for meeting the special-

<sup>20</sup> See Conant, *op. cit.*, pp 76 ff. He holds, and correctly we believe, that a "school cannot do an adequate job of meeting specialized needs unless it has a graduating class of at least 100 students." In his *Education in the Junior High School Years*, *op. cit.*, pp 38 ff, he states that for efficient operation, each grade of the junior high school should enroll 125 students.



Courtesy Dade County Florida Public Schools Photo by F. Edgar Lane

Personal typing is a very popular course in an increasing number of high schools. It may be offered as a special course or as a part of the regular business education program.

A first-year typing class in the Miami (Florida) Senior High School. It is open to students in grades ten through twelve and may be taken for personal use or for pre-vocational preparation.

ized needs and interests of students? In the opinion of the authors they are, providing, of course, that class organization, teaching procedures, and resources are such as to care for individual differences within each class.<sup>21</sup> In a sense, the elective program is a kind of natural grouping. Students with similar abilities and interests will, under proper guidance, elect similar courses.

Some arguments in favor of this plan are these:

1. It sets up no class barriers which may be a divisive influence in the school.
2. If the elective program is built upon a sound program of general

<sup>21</sup> See Chapters X and XI for the essential elements of a plan for providing for individual differences within classes.

education in which students of different abilities and background work together on common problems, in which specialized interests and needs are discovered, it is a logical extension of the on-going program.

However, an apparently increasing number of people believe that the normal program of electives is inadequate, particularly to meet the needs of talented students. They argue that:

1. There is too much heterogeneity in such courses, which results in the teacher not giving adequate attention to the talented students.
2. The most talented students within the class may not be adequately stimulated to high achievement because with only natural grouping the range of intellectual ability is wide, and the brighter students can "get by" with little effort.

**Providing for specialized education through ability grouping** This procedure was discussed briefly in terms of its impact upon the organization of general education in the previous chapter. At the risk of some repetition, we now propose to look at ability grouping with reference to the specialized facet of the curriculum.

By ability grouping, we refer to the practice of sectioning students in classes upon the basis of ability as determined by such measures as intelligence tests, achievement tests, teacher judgment, and the like. The purpose, of course, is to secure homogeneity in class groups. The usual assumption is that ability is general and hence that students may be grouped in "across-the-board" fashion. That is, a student in a top section of algebra would be placed automatically in top sections of language arts, science, etc. However, experience has shown that such grouping is relatively ineffective and that the practice of grouping by subjects is preferable, though much more difficult.

Without a doubt, the threat of technological and military superiority of the Soviet Union has stimulated renewed interest in provisions for selecting the academically gifted students and arranging special provisions for them. Under the impetus of this threat, some subjects formerly taught only at the ninth to twelfth grade levels have been moved down into the seventh and eighth grades. For example, algebra, usually offered in the ninth grade may be offered to the academically bright students in the eighth grade. To do this requires, of course, some plan of achievement testing and sectioning. Science, foreign languages, and other fields are also affected by the desire to "improve the quality of education for the gifted."

enrollment of 100 students in the graduating class, a group of 15 or 20 of them would be "counselled into" taking the recommended electives. But since Conant recommends that sectioning be "by subjects" rather than "across-the-board," conceivably these "academically talented" students would be in different sections in science, mathematics, and foreign language. In other words, there seems to be a conflict between Conant's conception of the academically talented group and his recommendations for sectioning by subjects. Nevertheless he recommends "strongly" that all or nearly all students who qualify as academically talented should elect four years of one foreign language, four years of mathematics, and three years of science, in addition to the required four years of English and three years of social studies in the general education program. This adds up to a total of 18 courses (in the four-year period) which require at least 15 hours of home work, and he adds:

Many academically talented pupils may wish to study a second foreign language or an additional course in social studies. Since such students are capable of handling twenty or more courses with homework, these additional courses may be added to the recommended minimum program. If the school is organized on a seven- or eight-period day (Recommendation 12), at least one additional course without homework (for example, music or art) may also be scheduled each year.<sup>25</sup>

Other provisions which Conant makes for specialized education include the development of "marketable skills" and, of course, provision for the slow learner.

Perhaps the Conant proposal—which was made after studying successful practices in some 50 selected comprehensive high schools—may be taken as typical. At any rate, it provides a thoughtful application of the use of ability grouping to provide an adequate program of specialized education.

Should the comprehensive high school adopt a program of ability grouping to meet specialized needs, especially of talented students? Truly this is a controversial issue. The principal arguments for this proposal are these:

1. When students are grouped on the basis of ability, the range of individual differences is greatly reduced. As a result the teacher can deal more effectively with the material and with individuals.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

2. Talented students will be stimulated to greater intellectual effort because of the challenge of their peers.

3. Since students tend to select as friends those with similar abilities and interests, grouping provides a normal channel for social life.

4. When students are heterogeneously grouped, the students of low or average ability cannot compete successfully with their classmates with greater ability. The result is frustration and discouragement.

On the other hand, the authors hold to the belief that the advocacy of the comprehensive high school as opposed to specialized high schools carries with it the implication that the school should be organized in a manner that will most likely promote the democratic values which are the principal justification for the comprehensive high school. We believe further that ability grouping in most cases fails in this respect.

The only justification for a program of ability grouping would seem to be: (1) very large classes, (2) lack of adequate resources, (3) slavery to the outmoded daily-assignment recitation method of teaching, utilizing a single text for *all* students in the class, (4) lack of a comprehensive program of electives geared to the ascertained needs of the students, and (5) lack of an adequate guidance program involving classroom teachers and skilled counselors.

**Providing for specialized education through multiple-choice ("Track" System) curriculums** The multiple-choice curriculum is almost as old as the public high school. Offerings are grouped in terms of programs designed to meet the needs of certain groups of students. Usually with these special programs are listed separately the required and elective subjects. For example, a high-school program of studies might be organized as follows: College Preparatory, General, Scientific, Commercial, Vocational Agriculture, Vocational Home Economics, and the like. Students at the beginning of the ninth grade would be required to select the "track" which they wished to follow. This system has almost disappeared in the junior high school—especially in the seventh and eighth grades. While it is still prevalent in the senior high schools, the best practice is to provide a wide variety of electives from which the student, with the aid of his counselor, may choose the courses suited to his immediate and long-range goals. Thus, programs are individualized and the tendency to "label" students by the use of such terms as academic, commercial, or vocational is minimized.

The multiple-choice curriculum, all too often, is just another divisive influence in the school. It tends to perpetuate the class system in society because as a rule the college-bound students of relatively high intellectual ability correspond roughly to the most favored socioeconomic group in the community, while students who are pursuing terminal vocational courses live on "the other side of the track."<sup>26</sup> Perhaps the only point in favor of the multiple-choice system is its simplicity, but this is hardly a justification for it.

**Providing for specialized education through acceleration** The practice of acceleration has been in existence for a long time. Usually it involves one or more of the following: permitting students to progress more rapidly than do normal students through the *regular* program. This may be accomplished through double promotions, skipping grades, or assignment of bright students to more rapidly moving classes by ability grouping; carrying five or six subjects instead of the conventional four; attendance at summer sessions; and a number of miscellaneous schemes. The debate between those who advocate acceleration and those who favor enrichment have been raging for many years. Those in favor of acceleration claim the following benefits:

1. It helps the talented students to complete their formal school work and enter upon their careers earlier. This meets the need for economic independence.
2. There are vast individual differences in rates of learning. Acceleration recognizes this fact.
3. The need for manpower demands that the time spent in formal education be as short as possible.
4. Acceleration provides a greater challenge for the bright student who is often bored by the slow pace of the class.

Opponents of acceleration present these arguments:

1. Education should not be regarded as a body of subject matter which is to be "covered" as rapidly as possible.
2. A policy of acceleration tends to encourage students to cover

<sup>26</sup> See: *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47. In Recommendation 2, Conant recommends against "tracks," even though the same objection can be raised against his proposal for ability grouping. See *Life*, XLIII, 120-121 (April 14, 1958) for a modified "track"-system chart which *Life* states was prepared "in collaboration with Dr. Conant." Perhaps this chart does not adequately reflect his present point of view.

ground rather than to dig more deeply. Hence, it may result in superficiality.

3. Maturational and emotional factors are important in the learning process and these tend to be neglected in favor of intellectual competence.

4. Acceleration implies that the school does not possess the resources and "know-how" to provide enriched experiences for the bright student.

5. The social adjustment problem of younger students competing with older students may become serious as the accelerated student reaches senior high school.

A final word: acceleration does not solve the basic problem of providing appropriate specialized education for all students. It has many of the same disadvantages as ability grouping, and in addition it tends to perpetuate the outmoded "ground-to-be-covered" conception of education.

**Providing for specialized education through advanced courses and seminars** Actually such courses are an extension of the elective program discussed earlier. The desire to provide quality education for the students with special talents has prompted many schools to set up elective courses in the academic fields which go far beyond the normal elective programs in these fields. For example, a school may offer college algebra, calculus, or a course labeled special mathematics, in which students are dealt with on a more or less individual basis and urged to dig deeper and advance more rapidly than is the case with other courses in the field. Other possibilities might be courses in analytics, surveying, and the like. Social studies offers a rich field for seminars and advanced courses. For example, a small group of students might profit from a course in philosophy with an emphasis upon ethics. Another group might want to explore the field of psychology as it throws light on human motivation and the behavior of groups. In the field of science, with the proliferation of knowledge, the possibilities are almost endless, e.g., mineralogy, metallurgy, Darwinism, public health, astrophysics. In the field of language arts, special advanced courses in radio script-writing, dramatics, poetry, and literary criticism offer rich opportunities for the pursuit of special interests. The fine and practical arts may provide unusual opportunities for advanced work in extending the student's skills and insights. And so with other areas of the comprehensive high-school curriculum.

It is a mistake to assume that "academic talent" is to be found only



*Courtesy, Amherst Central Junior-High School Photo by Donald Zimmerman*

As never before, schools are now providing special programs for the "academically" gifted students. This is part of the "post-sputnik" emphasis on quality or excellence.

Ninth-grade students in an advanced science section in Amherst Central Junior High School, Snyder, N. Y. They are in the process of dissecting a frog.

in ability in the fields of mathematics, science, and foreign languages as defined by Conant and discussed earlier in this chapter. Such restriction is purely arbitrary. And even if we accept Conant's limited concept, it must be recognized that talent is many-sided. As one of the authors stated in another connection.

Talented behavior is not restricted to any particular personality pattern or life style. And it is not restricted to any particular content. That is, there is no fundamental difference in talented behavior as it is manifested in



painting a picture, developing a scientific principle or discovering new procedures in human relations. . . . Talent involves more than the intellect. It is a function of the whole personality. This interpretation suggests that the motivation for talented behavior is the individual's tendency to fulfill himself, to realize his potentialities, to do the best that he is capable of doing. Here then, talent is defined as *the emergence in action of a product growing out of the unique qualities of the individual in their interaction with his external environment—the men, materials, and circumstances of his life*. The product may be a poem, a theory, a scientific discovery, a laboratory technique, a procedure in human relations, a painting, or the like. Some individuals are "idea men"; others may not be very effective in generating ideas but are quite talented in testing them out; still others are talented in the manner in which they present ideas to others. And there are some individuals who are outstanding in all of these respects.<sup>27</sup>

If we accept this concept of talent, it follows that the school, in setting up special courses and seminars, makes a serious mistake if it considers only a limited concept of academic talent. In other words, the program should be a balanced one.

As was pointed out at the outset of the discussion, providing for specialized education through advanced courses and seminars is a logical extension of the elective program of the high school and is justified on the same basis. However, the school should apply certain principles as it extends its program.

The following general suggestions are predicated upon the assumption that *the high school has a distinct obligation to meet all legitimate needs and interests of the students*. In practice, of course, this cannot be done. The school then must choose from among the various possibilities. The following principles directed toward helping schools with this problem were developed cooperatively by a seminar group under the direction of one of the authors.

1. *Priority is given to those activities which meet the special needs and interests of relatively large numbers of students.* As has previously been stated, it is seldom possible to achieve in a real school situation the ideal program in which *all* special needs and interests of *all* students are given optimal opportunity for development. Decisions will therefore have

<sup>27</sup>Elsie J. Alberty, *The Identification and Development of Talent in Heterogeneously Grouped Students in a General Education Program at the Secondary-School Level*. An unpublished report of a U. S. Office of Education Project, 1959. Note: The report of the first phase of the project, from which this excerpt was taken, dealt only with the development of a "model of talent."



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to be made in each school or school system as to which special needs and interests of its student population it is possible to meet and which ones, for the time being at least, will have to be neglected. It would seem that the first responsibility of a democratic school is to meet as adequately as possible the needs of as many of its students as possible, and therefore the first question to be asked should be: What specialized education offerings will be of benefit to the largest number of students?

2. *Priority is given to those activities which will foster the widest possible variety of opportunities for vocational and avocational pursuit.* It is not to be inferred from the statement of Principle 1 that the only concern in setting up specialized-education offerings will be the relative number of people which each area can serve. It is obviously the concern of any democratic society that as great a variety as possible of the individual talents, both vocational and avocational, within that society be given maximum opportunity for development. It is only in this way that a society can most productively develop its human resources.

3. *Priority is given to activities which enhance to the greatest extent the dominant values of democratic living.* This principle is, in a sense, a corollary to Principle 2. Since the school is a social institution rendering a service to society, and since ours is a democratic society, all the school's offerings both in general and in specialized education should help to develop in the students those human qualities which are necessary and desirable in a democracy. It should be noted, again, that these four principles are, in a sense, criteria to be applied in making choices among the various needed specialized offerings in those situations where it is physically impossible to offer a specialized-education program that will meet all the special needs and interests of all the students. It is to be hoped that these criteria will be applied as nearly as possible simultaneously and that choices will be made which will meet as many of them as fully as possible.

4. *Care is taken to be sensitive to the tendency of special groups to form along social-class lines.* Since individual differences in both ability and purpose are determined to a large extent by home background, it is natural that specialized groups will tend to form along social-class lines. It is not the function of the school to guide students into courses in such a way that all signs of class are eliminated from every group to which they belong. Neither should it place students in courses according to the socioeconomic group to which their parents belong. In

providing specialized courses, emphasis should be placed upon the individual student's interests and abilities, and not upon his social status. It is therefore the responsibility of the school in forming these groups to create new administrative devices (and revise already existing devices) so that they will contribute to this emphasis.

In concluding this section which has stressed specialized courses to meet the needs of talented students, it seems appropriate to quote from a significant article by Dale, entitled "The Forgotten Third." In his introduction, he points out:

In this fifth year after Sputnik we still deplore the neglect of the gifted and are avidly searching for hidden and under-developed talent. Dr. Conant and others have spoken thoughtfully and eloquently about the need for nurturing the talents of the upper 15 or 20 per cent of high school students.

True, we have neglected the gifted child. But the larger truth is that we have failed to help all children reach their full potential. I wish here to speak of the forgotten third, most of whom do not now graduate from high school. In our many reports about the educational health of the nation, our prospects for the future, there is at best a thoughtful, but brief mention of the less able one-third, and then a swift movement to a discussion of the talents of those pupils who most closely resemble the authors of the report.

But the neglected children are also a part of the precious human race. To ignore them, to speak disrespectfully of them, to sort them out, to look down upon them as inferior is basically undemocratic and will eventually corrupt and corrode rejector and rejected alike.<sup>28</sup>

Providing for specialized education through advanced placement programs Like many other innovating practices in dealing with the specialized needs of talented students, advanced placement programs have gained popularity as a result of the demand for trained leadership to meet the world crisis. The essence of the program is to provide a number of courses in the high school which are roughly equivalent to such courses offered in the freshman year in college. By special cooperative arrangement with the colleges, highly gifted college-bound students<sup>29</sup> are encouraged to enroll for such courses, e.g., freshman mathematics, English, chemistry. Upon passing an examination administered by the College

<sup>28</sup> Edgar Dale, "The Forgotten Third," *News Letter*, Ohio State University Bureau of Educational Research and Service, XXVI, 1-4 (April, 1961).

<sup>29</sup> Conant, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63. He believes that this group comprises about three per cent of the student population on a national basis.

The comprehensive high school which provides for the common and special needs and interests of *all* students seems more in keeping with our tradition and our democratic values than does the specialized high school. Most high schools—if for no other reasons than size and financial support—aim at comprehensiveness but fall far short. When this happens, the non-college-bound student suffers, because academic courses seem to have greater prestige. The ultimate remedy is to increase the size of school districts. With improvement in transportation facilities, there is no reason why progress should not be made in this direction.

Providing for specialized education through a rich and varied program of elective courses and student activities is the normal and natural way of meeting the needs of *all* students. However, schools must be careful to provide equality of opportunity for all students, regardless of potentialities.

With the threat of Soviet technological superiority and the demand that the schools institute programs to meet this threat several programs, some of them revivals of earlier and almost forgotten plans, are being introduced into the schools. The most common, although inapplicable to the majority of schools because of size, is ability grouping. Originally this plan of grouping students placed great emphasis upon the benefits to the slow learners. Now the emphasis has shifted to the brighter students. The great debate as to whether the intellectually more capable students should proceed at a more rapid rate (acceleration) or delve deeper into the various fields of knowledge (enrichment) goes on, with few tenable conclusions being reached. However, acceleration, as expressed in advanced placement programs, seems to be more popular at the present time. Closely related to advanced placement programs are advanced specialized courses, usually in the academic subjects. These are designed to stimulate the talented student.

Undoubtedly these plans possess merit—especially if schools continue to foster the ground-to-be-covered, single textbook, daily assignment procedure in teaching. However, this procedure offers little opportunity to provide for the vast individual differences in an increasingly heterogeneous school population. One way out is to introduce some form of ability grouping, with its many ramifications. Another solution, which has not been adequately explored, is to reorganize the curriculum and to develop teaching procedures that make it possible to deal with individual differences within the class group.

Possibly such innovations as team teaching, programmed learning, and educational television will provide answers to some of the problems discussed in this chapter. At present it is too early to assess the results. They may have the effect of breaking the lockstep and raising the quality of teaching, but on the other hand, they may result in the perpetuation of an outworn psychology and a neglect of intangible but important democratic values. Careful objective experimentation is needed—the kind that doesn't set out to "prove" conclusions already reached by the investigators.

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## *Procedures for Determining the Scope and Sequence of the Curriculum*



PRECEDING CHAPTERS OF this book have dealt with some of the foundations of curriculum development and reorganization. We have taken a critical look at high-school education today and found it deficient in many ways. We have tried to discover what it would really mean if we were to base the program squarely upon democratic values. We have looked to psychology for help in finding out what kind of learning is most effective. We have also struggled with the problem of trying to understand the adolescent—"what makes him tick." And finally, we have looked at the various possible designs of the curriculum as they apply to general education and specialized education.

We now face the crucial and difficult problem of determining curriculum content. Obviously, the nature of the curriculum—defined as the sum total of student activities which the school sponsors for the purpose of achieving its objective—will be influenced by the values held by those who determine what shall be taught. It follows that the procedures utilized for deriving this content will be selected in terms of certain criteria held to be valid by the curriculum-development group. For example, if the group believes that transmission of the cultural heritage is the most important task of education, it will attempt to discover those elements of the heritage which are most important to be learned at various levels of the development of the learner. If the group believes that adjustment to present-day living is most important it will utilize a procedure which will attempt to discover the activities which make up adult living in our society. If it believes that the most important aim of education is the cultivation of the mind or intellect, then naturally this will call for discover-

2. A fixed curriculum based upon accepted authority robs the teacher of the stimulus to be creative and to rely upon his own intelligence.

3. A curriculum resulting from this procedure is likely to become static and unresponsive to the needs and problems of youth.

These criticisms should not be construed as denying the validity of utilizing authoritative sources in curriculum development. Pronouncements of the experts, national commissions and committees, textbooks and their authors, experiences of other curriculum-development groups are useful data which should be examined and utilized by every curriculum-development group, whatever procedure it may adopt.

II. The scientific or analytical procedure This procedure grew out of the scientific movement in education which had its beginnings early in the century. The psychologists, under the leadership of Edward Lee Thorndike and others,<sup>3</sup> building upon the work of William James, began to question the armchair approach to an understanding of the individual and how he learns, and conducted much experimentation in this field. As a counterpart of this movement, the use of intelligence and standardized tests became extremely popular. "Whatever exists, exists in some amount and can be measured" became the slogan of the test-makers.

The influence of the scientific movement was felt almost immediately in the field of curriculum development. One of the pioneers in this movement was Franklin Bobbitt who proclaimed in 1918:

The technique of curriculum-making along scientific lines has been but little developed. The controlling purposes of education have not been sufficiently particularized. We have aimed at a vague culture, an ill-defined discipline, a nebulous harmonious development of the individual, an indefinite moral character-building, an unparticularized social efficiency, or, often enough nothing more than escape from work. . . . But the era of contentment with larger, undefined purposes is rapidly passing. *An age of science is demanding exactness and particularity.*

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Edward L. Thorndike, *Educational Psychology*, Briefer Course, first published by Teachers College, Columbia University in 1914 as a summary and simplification of his earlier works: *The Original Nature of Man*, *The Psychology of Learning*, *Work and Fatigue*, and *Individual Differences*; and John B. Watson, *Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist*, Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Company, 1919. For one of the best and most readable analyses and evaluations of early psychological theory, see the writings of Boyd H. Bode, especially his *Conflicting Psychologies of Learning*, Boston, D. C. Heath and Company, 1929, and *How We Learn*, Boston, D. C. Heath and Company, 1940.

The technique of scientific method is at present being developed in every important aspect of education. Experimental laboratories and schools are discovering accurate methods of measuring and evaluating different types of educational processes. Bureaus of educational measurement are discovering scientific methods of analyzing results, of diagnosing specific situations, and of prescribing remedies. Scientific method is being applied to the fields of budget-making, child accounting, systems of grading and promotion, etc.

. . . The scientific task preceding all others is the determination of the curriculum. For this we need a scientific technique. At present this is being rapidly developed in connection with various fields of learning.<sup>4</sup>

Bobbitt's basic procedure for "scientific" curriculum making was exceedingly simple. An analysis of human activity should be made in order to find out what activities people perform in the significant areas of human experience. As Bobbitt states, "education is to prepare men and women for the activities of every kind which make up, or which ought to make up, well-rounded adult life." Having discovered these activities, the *job of the school is to teach students to perform them. The activities of adult life are the specific objectives of the curriculum. The activities by which students learn to perform them are the curriculum.*

Bobbitt proposed a classification of major activities of life as the basis for his analysis. Since it has been widely used, it is probably worthwhile to quote it:

1. Language activities: social intercommunication.
2. Health activities.
3. Citizenship activities.
4. General social activities, meeting and mingling with others.
5. Spare-time activities, amusements, recreation.
6. Keeping one's self mentally fit—analagous to the health activities of keeping one's self physically fit.
7. Religious activities.
8. Parental activities, the upbringing of children, the maintenance of a proper home life.
9. Unspecialized or non-vocational practical activities.
10. Labor in one's calling.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Franklin Bobbitt, *The Curriculum*, New York, Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1918, pp. 41-42.

<sup>5</sup> Franklin Bobbitt, *How To Make a Curriculum*, Boston, Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1924, p. 7.

Bobbitt then proceeded to analyze each of these major categories into appropriate specific subdivisions. The first nine categories yielded 821 specific objectives, stated as abilities, skills, habits, and knowledge. Thus, the objectives of education for any one individual would be the 821 specific objectives in the first nine categories plus the specific objectives called for in the particular vocation selected by that individual. These would be determined by the same activity-analysis technique.<sup>5</sup> Bobbitt makes it clear that what he is proposing is a *technique* for curriculum making, not a *curriculum*. His analysis is suggestive of the kind that should be made.<sup>6</sup>

Having determined the specific objectives (scope) the next task is to determine how these activities should be taught. This was to be accomplished by allocating the specific objectives to the appropriate subject fields,<sup>7</sup> and determining the student activities which would contribute to the realization of each objective.<sup>8</sup> The problem of sequence is dealt with in this fashion:

The next logical step . . . is to lay out the series of detailed pupil activities and experiences for each of the grades. The curriculum-making group will take the series of types of pupil activities and plan the exact things to be done through all the weeks and months of the first grade; then through the second grade, and so on through each of the grades of general education to the end of the senior-high school or junior college. These statements will present lists of readings to be used, lists of problems to be solved on the basis of the readings, and whatever else will enter into the finished detailed curriculum.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of the simplicity and plausibility of the activity-analysis procedure proposed by Bobbitt, its implementation is exceedingly complex. No one has succeeded in analyzing all of the activities in which people engage, to say nothing of the activities in which they *ought* to engage, but the technique has proved exceedingly valuable in analyzing certain segments of experience—particularly in the vocational field. Charters pioneered in this field and applied the technique in such fields as nursing education, pharmacy, stenography, teacher education,<sup>7</sup> and the like. It has also been used to determine what ought to be taught in given subject

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>7</sup> See W. W. Charters and Douglas Waples, *The Commonwealth Teacher Training Study*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1929.

fields. The armed forces and industry have used this procedure widely in training personnel to perform specific jobs.\*

**Evaluation** There are a number of arguments favoring the use of the scientific-analytical approach which have been advanced. Among them are these:

1. It conceives of the curriculum as an instrument for preparing youth for living in the adult world. To this end it finds its orientation in the things which people *do* rather than in some general concept of mind training.
2. It utilizes the cultural heritage, not as an end in itself, but as a resource in preparing for present-day living.
3. It applies the pragmatic test of usefulness to the individual in determining what should be taught and utilizes objective means of determining the value of curriculum content.

It must be recognized, however, that the procedure has serious shortcomings when conceived of as a complete program for curriculum development.

(There is a very great difference between the activities that people *actually* perform and those they *ought* to perform in terms of the ideals and values held to be significant in the culture. In other words, a guiding philosophy is essential if the analysis of human activity is to be of value. The acceptance of this conclusion, however, tends to throw doubt on the analysis technique, for if the analysis is to be made upon the basis of a philosophy, it no longer possesses the objectivity which is one of the chief claims of its adherents. (To call such a procedure *scientific* requires an impossible stretch of the imagination. When "oughtness" is brought into the picture, the activity-analysis procedure tends to bog down, for the activities which people *ought* to perform may not exist at any given time; hence, they could not be discovered by analysis.) There have been many attempts to meet this criticism, such as the selection of the "best" citizens and making an analysis of their activities; securing the judgment of "frontier thinkers" on what activities the good citizen *ought* to perform, and

\* See W. W. Charters, *Curriculum Construction*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1923, Part II, for an excellent survey of studies in curriculum making in various subject fields. For a modern application of the use of this procedure see: George Louis Brandon, *An Appraisal of the Preparation of Industrial Education Supervisors in Ohio Colleges for Teacher Education*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1952.



obtaining the consensus of large numbers of people on appropriate activities. Undoubtedly these techniques yield valuable data for the curriculum maker but cannot be relied upon as an all-inclusive and complete technique for curriculum making. Assuming that such an analysis of human activity *could* be made, (society is changing so rapidly that it would be out of date by the time it was completed. It should be pointed out, too, that even though such an analysis could be made, the resulting curriculum would be adult-centered rather than student-centered.)

Undoubtedly the activity-analysis procedure succeeded in sensitizing the curriculum maker to the need for examining curriculum materials from the standpoint of their actual function in human activities. In this way, he succeeded in eliminating from the curriculum much material that could be justified only on the basis of an outworn psychology or of tradition. As we examine current procedures in curriculum making, we shall see that its influence continues to be felt. In general, we may say that it was a step forward in curriculum making when viewed in the perspective of the past. It introduced a new dimension in curriculum development in that it replaced authority and tradition as the chief sources of curriculum content, with facts and principles derived from direct experience or secured by means of interviews, questionnaires, checklists, and direct observation. These tools, though lacking in the exact and controlled method of science, are valuable and will continue to be used in curriculum research. But as long as the goals of education continue to be set in terms of changing values, ideals, individual needs, and national aspirations, a truly scientific procedure of curriculum development is undesirable, if not impossible. This is not to say, of course, that scientific research into various aspects of the curriculum is not needed.<sup>9</sup>

III. The social-functions procedure This plan bases the scope, or content, of the curriculum upon the "major functions" or "areas of human living." In some respects it resembles the activity-analysis procedure. As a matter of fact, the plan seems to have been utilized first by W. W. Charters, a pioneer in the activity-analysis movement, in 1921/in

<sup>9</sup> For an interesting example of how research may function, see the series of pamphlets: *What Research Says to the Teacher*, sponsored jointly by Department of Classroom Teachers of the NEA and the Educational Research Association, Washington, D.C., National Education Association. The first pamphlet was issued in 1953 and at present the series numbers more than a dozen pamphlets. See also, A. Harry Passow, "Curriculum Research Status, Needs and Prospects," *Educational Research Bulletin*, XXXIX, 197-205 (November 9, 1960).

developing a curriculum for Stephens College. The first thoroughgoing plan for applying it to the curriculum of the secondary schools was made in Virginia under the direction of Caswell and Campbell in 1934.<sup>10</sup>

¶ **Determining the scope of the curriculum** What is a social function of living? According to the above-mentioned authors,

Study of group life shows that there are certain major centers about which the activities of individuals and the plans and problems of the group tend to cluster. These centers, which may be referred to as social functions, tend to persist and to be common for all organized groups. For example, certain of the activities of primitive tribes tended to center around protection of the lives and properties of the members of the group. In group life today protection of life and property continues to be an important function about which many activities cluster and from which a group of related problems and issues arises. Since these centers or social functions represent points about which real life activities tend to gather and organize, it is considered reasonable that a curriculum which is concerned with guiding children into effective participation in the activities of real life may use these social functions or points of emphasis and orientation in outlining the curriculum.<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps the best way to clarify the functions of living concept is to present the following list adopted by the State of Virginia as a basis for its curriculum: (1) protection and conservation of life, property, and natural resources, (2) production of goods and services and distribution of the returns of production, (3) consumption of goods and services, (4) communication and transportation of goods and people, (5) recreation, (6) expression of aesthetic impulses, (7) expression of religious impulses, (8) education, (9) extension of freedom, (10) integration of the individual, and (11) exploration. /

These eleven functions defined the *scope* of the curriculum. They were used as "points of emphasis" for determining the content of the curriculum.

**Determining sequence of learning activities** Obviously, if we neglect the problem of sequence and think of the curriculum merely in

<sup>10</sup> See Hollis L. Caswell and Doak S. Campbell, *Curriculum Development*, New York, The American Book Company, 1935, pp. 173-186. See also Henry Harap, ed., *The Changing Curriculum*, New York, D. Appleton Century Company, Inc., 1937; *Tentative Course of Study for Virginia Elementary Schools*, Richmond, State Board of Education, 1934; *Tentative Course of Study for the Core Curriculum of the Virginia Secondary Schools*, Richmond, State Board of Education, 1934.

<sup>11</sup> Caswell and Campbell, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-174.

O. I. Frederick<sup>14</sup> directed a study of the same problem but with a somewhat different technique. He selected thirty-eight "classifications of human activities." These were chosen from formulations of curriculum-making groups, sociologists, anthropologists, "intelligent American club women," and writers of "ideal commonwealths." A frequency count of the various areas included by each writer was made, and it was found that the "*universal types of activity, activities in which men have always engaged and probably always will be engaged,*" could be classified into nine areas, as follows: (1) protecting life and health, (2) securing a living, (3) making a home, (4) expressing religious impulses, (5) expressing aesthetic impulses, (6) securing an education, (7) cooperating in social and civic action, (8) engaging in recreation, and (9) conserving and improving material conditions.

In order to determine whether or not these nine areas included "all vital problems of human activity," an analysis was made of forty-four recent books dealing with trends and problems of contemporary life. This reading yielded 349 problems and needs of human life, which were classified under the nine areas of human activity. Space does not permit the listing of all of these problems and needs of living. However, in order that the reader may get the general flavor of the entire list, the major problems under the area, *Protecting Life and Health*, are listed. They are as follows: (1) making the school environment more healthful and safe, (2) cooperating with health agencies for a more healthful community, (3) practicing habits of personal hygiene, (4) preventing and controlling disease, (5) protecting life from accidents, (6) securing and maintaining mental and emotional health, (7) protecting the consumer from fraudulent and harmful medical goods and services, (8) developing an adequate medical service for all persons at reasonable cost, (9) promoting and utilizing medical research, (10) conserving and increasing the racial vitality of the American people.<sup>15</sup>

These problems were to serve as the basis for the curriculum. The use of the nine areas of human activity was intended to guarantee that

<sup>14</sup>O. I. Frederick, *et al*, *Areas of Human Activity and Problems of Life* (Mimeographed), Jackson, Mississippi State Department of Education, 1937. See also O. I. Frederick, and Lucile J. Farquhar, "Areas of Human Activity," *Journal of Educational Research*, XXX, 672-679 (May, 1937).

<sup>15</sup>O. I. Frederick and Lucile J. Farquhar, "Problems of Life," *School Review*, XLVI, 337-345; 415-422 (May and June, 1938), pp. 341-342.

each individual participate in all the significant areas of living. Working with the problems on the maturational level of the student would facilitate a growing understanding of the problems of contemporary living. Some form of the social-functions procedure was used in numerous state and city curriculum-development programs in the period following its use in Virginia. Notable among these were: Mississippi, California, Alabama, Kansas, and Santa Barbara, California. The scope of these programs did not vary widely from that formulated by Virginia.

However, there was a tendency to make the sequence more flexible, and to apply the broad framework to the teaching of subjects, instead of developing units of work cutting across subject lines. Unfortunately, only fragments of these early programs have persisted to the present. However, more recent programs show the unmistakable influence of these pioneer attempts to find a procedure of curriculum development that would yield a curriculum more closely related to current living than the traditional armchair procedures. Two of these attempts will be described briefly.

**The Georgia program** In 1954 the State Department of Education of Georgia issued a bulletin<sup>16</sup> intended to be a guide for local curriculum-planning groups. The major thesis of the bulletin is that since "education is concerned with the improvement of living, it must derive its content from the problems of living with which the individual must deal." These life problems are classified as follows: (1) Achieving and Maintaining Physical and Mental Health; (2) Making a Vocational Choice and Earning a Living; (3) Performing Responsibilities of Citizenship; (4) Conserving and Utilizing Resources; (5) Communicating Information and Ideas; (6) Expressing Aesthetic Values. These "problems of living" constitute the scope of the curriculum. They form the basis of the "Problems of Living Chart" which suggests suitable educational experiences (sequence) at each of the following levels of maturity:

1. Kindergarten—"The immediate environment. The home, play, and nature."
2. Early Elementary (Grades 1-2-3). "The immediate environment. The home, school, and community."
3. Later Elementary (Grades 4-5-6-7). "Exploring and adventuring in an expanding environment. Local, state, nation, world."

<sup>16</sup> *Curriculum Framework for Georgia Schools*, Atlanta, State Department of Education, 1954, pp 7-13, *passim*.

4. Lower Secondary (Grades 7-8-9). "The relationship of the individual to the modern world."
5. Upper Secondary (Grades 10-11-12). "Individual and group relationships in meeting modern problems with reference to all areas of living, organized and unorganized group efforts, world civilizations and cultures, government, social usages and customs."
6. Adult Education. "Individual and group relationships in adjusting to society in which we live, in terms of the needs and previous educative experiences of the individual." *Ibid.*, p. 12.

The proposed sequence of experiences is based upon a "Growth Chart" which sets forth the "characteristics of growth and development of children and young people derived from research in the field, and their potentialities for achieving the four educational objectives set forth by the Educational Policies Commission"<sup>17</sup> and accepted by the state curriculum-development group.

Local groups are urged to utilize this framework in making local studies of children and youth, and to utilize, test, and evaluate the suggested activities and others added to meet local conditions in the light of their effectiveness in meeting the proposed major objectives.

It should be noted that the general plan of this program follows the pattern set by Virginia and other states and cities. Functions of living become "problems of living" but do not differ markedly from other formulations. Sequence at various grade levels is identified by centers of interest but several grades are combined under each center. This is a variation of the earlier practices. Little mention is made of core or unified studies programs in the high school whereas the earlier studies stressed such programs.

**The Chicago program** Another suggestive program for general education that has borrowed heavily from the *social-functions procedure* was developed in Chicago.<sup>18</sup> It is not strictly a curriculum, but rather a plan for organizing resources. It was developed over a six-year period by the Curriculum Council of the Chicago Public Schools made up of representatives of professional teaching and administrative personnel, university specialists, lawyers, and civic leaders. "On the basis of a comprehensive study of statements of curriculum scope, beginning with Spencer's

<sup>17</sup> *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy*, Washington, D.C., Educational Policies Commission, 1938.

<sup>18</sup> *Source Materials of the Educational Program, A Guidebook of Living and Learning Experiences*, Chicago, Chicago Public Schools, 1955.

classification and the seven *Cardinal Principles* and ranging through subsequent pronouncements of national and state committees and findings of investigations conducted by university specialists, [The Council] outlined the scope for the Chicago curriculum in terms of nine functions of living."

These nine "major functions of living" as finally revised are as follows:

1. *Practicing American citizenship*
2. *Using the tools of communication*
3. *Developing economic competence*
4. *Improving family living*
5. *Protecting life and health*
6. *Building human relationships*
7. *Enjoying wholesome leisure*
8. *Satisfying spiritual and aesthetic needs*
9. *Meeting vocational responsibilities*<sup>19</sup>

Each of these "major functions of living" (scope) was then broken down into "strands" of *activities of living* appropriate for the various stages of growth (sequence) set up by the Bureau of Child Study. These stages are as follows:

1. *Infancy* (Pre-school, below 5 years)
2. *Early Childhood* (Kindergarten-primary, 5 to 7 years)
3. *Later Childhood* (Grades 3-5, 8 to 10 years)
4. *Early Adolescence* (Grades 6-8, 11 to 13 years)
5. *Adolescence* (Grades 9-12, 14 to 17 years)
6. *Early Adulthood* (Junior college)<sup>20</sup>

In each of the thousands of activities of living that are listed, the appropriate "areas of learning" are designated. To facilitate understanding of how this curriculum-resource guide is organized, the following example, taken more or less at random, is given. It pertains to the fifth stage of growth—adolescence, which is described as "(1) extreme anxiety to be popular in peer groups; (2) strong identification with admired adults; (3) *increased assertion of independence from the family*; (4) *eagerness to serve worthy causes*; and (5) sexual maturity with accompanying changes in emotions and interests."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218.

The first "major function of living"—Practicing American Citizenship—is divided into these "strands" as follows:

1. Respecting Property
2. Cooperating with Persons in Authority
3. Achieving Civic Experience, Responsibility
4. Complying with Regulations and Laws
5. Showing Loyalty and Patriotism
6. Knowing and Appreciating American History
7. Acquiring an Understanding of the Structure and Functions of Local, State, and National Governments
8. Observing American Economic Ways
9. Appreciating American Efforts toward International Peace.<sup>22</sup>

Under these nine "strands" are listed more than 100 "activities of living" appropriate for this "stage of growth" together with the "areas of learning" in which each activity might be learned. The following excerpt is taken verbatim from the report:

<i>Activities of Living</i>	<i>Areas of Learning</i>
1. Respecting property	
Sharing in making necessary repairs in the home	Social Studies—Practical Arts—Home
Cooperating with members of the family in plans for beautifying the home	Social Studies—Art—Practical Arts—Home
Conserving and beautifying school property	Social Studies—Home Room Civic Association—Extra Class
Participating in anti-vandalism campaign	Social Studies—Home Room—Auditorium—Civic Association—Home—Community
Accepting cooperation responsibility as a necessary ingredient in caring for public property	Social Studies—Home Room—Civic Association—Home—Community
Taking a proportionate share in community measures to conserve or rehabilitate property	Social Studies—Civic Association—Home—Community
Cooperating in keeping parks free of litter	Social Studies—Civic Association—Community

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 218–222, *passim*.

Cooperating in plans to reduce the breakage of glass in the school. Taking good care of library books	Social Studies—Civic Association—Home Room
Assuming responsibility for repairs to property one has damaged	Social Studies—Home Room—Home—Community
Understanding the issues and problems involved in the conservation of natural resources	Social Studies—Home—Community <sup>23</sup>

Suggestions are given on: how teachers may develop teaching-learning units based on major functions; activities; how principals may use the "source lists" in carrying on his work with teachers and community groups; and how local individual schools may utilize them in building courses of study and in securing appropriate resource materials.

*Steps in the social-functions procedure* We have now completed a brief survey of the *social-functions procedure* together with past and current illustrations of its use. By way of summary, the following are the steps which a school might take if it followed this procedure in developing its curriculum:

1. Formulate a statement of the philosophy and purposes of the school which would include an analysis of the various objectives which the school seeks to attain.

2. Decide upon the major areas, functions, or problems of living, either by accepting a formulation worked out by others or as the result of research (scope).

3. Break down the areas, functions, or problems of living to the extent that is necessary for clarity and effective use.

4. Make a study of the characteristics of adolescents at each level of development (or accept a formulation already made).

5. Upon the basis of (a) the objectives of the school, (b) the major areas, functions, or problems of living, and (c) the characteristics of adolescents, decide upon appropriate centers of interest for each grade or age or developmental level.

6. Determine the design of the curriculum.

7. Plan units of work related to the centers of interest and appropriate to the needs, interests, and abilities of the various groups, which

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218.



are significant for attaining the objectives, and which orient the student in the major areas, functions or problems of living.

The design of the curriculum resulting from the social-functions procedure As has been pointed out, this procedure was originally intended to develop a curriculum which was rooted in major areas of human activity, whether expressed as functions or problems, rather than in the major fields of knowledge. The fields of knowledge were not, of course, to be discarded but utilized as resources for learning—in terms of attitudes, understandings, and skills needed to solve problems or perform effectively in the various areas of living. To this end, the early programs provided for general education by some type of fusion or unification of studies. For example, in the Virginia program,<sup>24</sup> in the eighth grade, four out of a total of seven periods per day were allotted to the core (general education). The remainder of the school day was given over to physical education, out-of-class activities, and electives. During the four periods of the core time might be set aside for dealing with special phases of mathematics. Learning activities included material from social studies, language, arts, science, and mathematics. In the ninth grade, core time was cut to three periods and provided for instruction in social studies, language arts, and science. (Note that mathematics was not included.) The remainder of the school day was given over to physical education, out-of-class activities, and electives. Presumably the electives were taught as separate subjects, but in terms of the same general principles of scope and sequence that operate in the core.

It will be noted that the core-curriculum organization described above breaks with logical organization of subjects. However, it does not break with *subjects*. It unifies certain subjects in terms of broad problems. Usually social science is the center of this unification, with science and language playing significant roles. In general, this program conforms to the definition of the unified subject-centered core (*Type Three*) given in Chapter VI.

However, not all curriculums developed by the *social-functions* procedure eventuate in a design involving a unified studies program. For example, the Georgia Program discussed above assumes for the most part that subjects will retain their identity though at some levels several sub-

<sup>24</sup> See *Manual of Administration for High Schools of Virginia* (Tentative edition), Richmond, Virginia State Board of Education, 1937, pp. 65-68.

jects may be included in a large time block. Likewise the Chicago proposal might result in a separate subject design. In other words, there is no reason why this procedure needs to be confined to a unified studies or problems of living program in general education. The teacher of science may, for example, utilize the areas of living and centers of interest for enriching science experiences. The systematic application of the procedure would undoubtedly modify significantly both the scope and sequence of science subject matter. Were this to be done, the textbook could no longer be closely followed, for the problems developed would have to meet the criterion of student interests and at the same time bear a close relationship to the persistent problems of the adolescent in the various areas of living. In some schools, the scope and sequence chart, a schematic organization of the areas of living in a horizontal column and the suggested emphases at each grade level in vertical columns, is given a conspicuous place in each classroom. The teacher uses it as a check on his program. He may thereby determine whether or not his work contributes significantly to the solution of problems in the various areas of living and is consistent with the emphases upon student interests, abilities, and problems as indicated in the suggested sequence.

✓ **Evaluation of the social-functions procedure** The procedure is alleged to have the following advantages:

1. It provides a means of determining the scope and sequence of learning experiences more closely related to the problems of current living.
2. It provides for continuity and articulation through the established sequence of learning in terms of developmental levels.
3. Through the use of the scope and sequence chart it makes it possible for teachers better to visualize the entire program.
4. It provides the teacher who wishes to break away from rigid subject-centered teaching with a sense of security.
5. It provides a ready means for an *all-school* approach to curriculum development.
6. It is adaptable to school units of various types—state, county, city, and individual schools.

On the other side of the coin, certain disadvantages appear:

1. There is danger that the emphasis of the curriculum will be cen-

tered upon the problems of adult living to the neglect of the present needs, problems and interests of students.

2. The established centers of interest for each grade or developmental level are more or less artificial and arbitrary even though they purport to be validated by research in human growth and development.

3. The sequence of learning experiences implied by these centers of interest is not to be taken too seriously. In general, the proposed sequence is based upon certain assumptions such as: learning should proceed from the simple to the complex; from the immediate to the remote; from the concrete to the abstract, on the ground that the learner becomes increasingly capable of dealing with abstract ideas as he matures physically, intellectually and emotionally. We may grant these assumptions and still challenge their arbitrary application.

14. The persistent life situations procedure<sup>25</sup> In a sense, this procedure may be considered as a modified social-functions approach since it employs somewhat similar techniques for determining scope and sequence. It is treated here as a separate procedure because of the emphasis which it places upon student problems, needs, and interests and because it points to a flexible curriculum design based upon human growth and development in a complex, rapidly changing society. As the authors state, the "foundation of the proposed design is a blend of the genuine concerns of learners with society's needs and values. Learning to meet problems at their level of maturity, growing more able to face and handle the problems of tomorrow—this goal can be achieved when the situations of everyday living are seen in the light of *persistent life situations*, those situations that recur in the life of the individual in many different ways as he grows from infancy to maturity."<sup>26</sup>

The central task of the curriculum maker then is to identify and classify "the daily life concerns of children and youth in terms of persistent life situations with which all members of society must be able to deal."<sup>27</sup> Such identification and classification would constitute the *scope* of the curriculum.

<sup>25</sup> The details of this procedure together with a curriculum design based upon it are ably set forth in: Florence B. Stratemeyer, Hamden Forkner, Margaret McKim, and Harry Passow, *Developing a Curriculum for Modern Living*, Second Edition, Revised, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1937. The present authors have drawn heavily on this volume for the presentation of this procedure.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

The writers claim no finality for their own analysis and classification of persistent life situations—indeed they insist repeatedly that each curriculum-development group should make the kind of analysis “in which it feels comfortable and effective.” In a sense then their analysis is but an *illustration* of the proposed procedure.

The persistent life situations with which all members of society *must* deal are listed in the following abbreviated outline:

## MASTER LIST OF PERSISTENT LIFE SITUATIONS

### SITUATIONS CALLING FOR GROWTH IN INDIVIDUAL CAPACITIES

#### *Health*

- A. Satisfying Physiological Needs
- B. Satisfying Emotional and Social Needs
- C. Avoiding and Caring for Illness and Injury

#### *Intellectual Power*

- A. Making Ideas Clear
- B. Understanding the Ideas of Others
- C. Dealing with Quantitative Relationships
- D. Using Effective Methods of Work

#### *Moral Choices*

- A. Determining the Nature and Extent of Individual Freedom
- B. Determining Responsibility to Self and Others

#### *Aesthetic Expression and Appreciation*

- A. Finding Sources of Aesthetic Satisfaction in Oneself
- B. Achieving Aesthetic Satisfaction Through the Environment

### SITUATIONS CALLING FOR GROWTH IN SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

#### *Person to Person Relationships*

- A. Establishing Effective Social Relations with Others
- B. Establishing Effective Working Relations with Others

#### *Group Membership*

- A. Deciding when to join a Group
- B. Participating as a Group Member
- C. Taking Leadership Responsibilities

#### *Intergroup Relationships*

- A. Working with Racial, Religious, and National Groups
- B. Working with Socio-economic Groups
- C. Dealing with Groups Organized for Action

SITUATIONS CALLING FOR GROWTH IN ABILITY TO DEAL  
WITH ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND FORCES

*Natural Phenomena*

- A. Dealing with Physical Phenomena
- B. Dealing with Plant, Animal, and Insect Life
- C. Using Physical and Chemical Forces

*Technological Resources*

- A. Using Technological Resources
- B. Contributing to Technological Advance

*Economic Social-Political Structures and Forces*

- A. Earning a Living
- B. Securing Goods and Services
- C. Providing for Social Welfare
- D. Molding Public Opinion
- E. Participating in Local and National Government<sup>28</sup>

So much for *scope*. The *sequence* of the curriculum is determined by the "every-day experiences of learners" in facing persistent life situations. The maturational levels utilized by the authors of the procedure are as follows: (1) Early Childhood, (2) Later Childhood, (3) Youth, and (4) Adulthood.

For each of these maturational levels a large number of "possible experiences" are grouped around each "persistent life problem" that the authors of this procedure have identified. The persistent life problems are classified in terms of the Master List of Persistent Life Situations. Perhaps an illustration will make the procedure clearer. The first major division of "persistent life situations," *Growth in Individual Capacities* is broken down into several categories, the first one of which is *Health*. This category is further broken down into several categories, the first of which is *Satisfying Physiological Needs*. Under this heading we find *persistent life problems* as follows: (1) Meeting Food Needs, (2) Meeting Needs for Air and Light, (3) Maintaining Comfortable Body Temperature, (4) Securing Needed Rest and Activity, (5) Meeting Sex Needs, and (6) Getting Rid of Body Wastes.<sup>29</sup> These, in the judgment of the authors of this procedure, are the problems which *all* people must face

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 155-165, *passim*. Because of space limitations, only major headings are listed. The complete chart also lists typical experiences in which "learners of different maturity levels might face the given persistent life situations in their everyday living."

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 174-182, *passim*.

in meeting their physiological needs. Now let's complete our illustration by looking at the first of these "life problems."

*Meeting Food Needs*—in terms of "typical" experience of learners at each maturational level.<sup>20</sup>

1. *Early Childhood.* Adjusting to family food patterns—Trying out new foods, learning to eat standard family dishes; understanding general reasons for differences in foods eaten by various members of family; discovering general reasons for varied food patterns among one's friends, accepting paternal choices in restaurant meals; sharing in mid-morning lunch at school . . .
2. *Later Childhood.* Making choices that satisfy individual tastes within family patterns—Suggesting alternative dishes in family meals; choosing among kinds of food in cafeterias; finding reason for school lunchroom regulations regarding choice of food; selecting food for school lunch box; suggesting foods for special occasions; deciding what to eat between meals, choosing candy or other food on which to spend allowance . . .
3. *Youth.* Selecting food to achieve definite physical results—Planning and preparing occasional family meals; preparing meals for young children; helping prepare meals for invalids, following special athletes' diet; considering problems of dieting to maintain attractive personal appearance, deciding whether to adopt food fads of 'gang'; selecting refreshments for parties, school, banquets . . .
4. *Adulthood.* Providing balanced meals in terms of individual needs of those who consume them—Adjusting food choices to personal needs; feeding invalids; selecting refreshments for special occasions; deciding when to supplement diet with special nutritional products . . .<sup>21</sup>

The preceding explanation and illustration provides some basis for making comparisons between this procedure and the *social-functions* procedure discussed earlier:

1. There is considerable similarity between the two procedures in the manner in which scope is determined. *Persistent life situations* are roughly comparable to *universal problems or functions of living*, even though the form of analysis may differ materially. The quest in both plans is to discover the major aspects of everyday living which define the general course of the learner's experience as he grows from childhood to maturity. The goal in both cases is effective living in our society.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

2. The sequence of learning in both plans is determined by the maturational level of the learner and both follow a simple-to-complex, widening-horizons theory of maturation. However, the *persistent life situations procedure* is much more flexible in that it prescribes no *centers* of interest from grade to grade, but rather lists "possible" problems within very broad categories, leaving to teacher-student planning the actual determination of appropriate learning experiences.

The design of the curriculum resulting from the persistent life situations procedure Obviously any procedure for curriculum development eventuates in some sort of curriculum design once the broad framework of scope and sequence is established. The authors of this procedure favor the use of a "generous" block of time for dealing with the common experiences of students which are planned for cooperatively by teacher and student. The "core" teacher should know the students well enough to provide effective guidance and to utilize all available resources including specialized personnel in the school. However, they indicate many ways in which their procedure might be adapted to a separate subject design, but regard such a program as transitional.

Individual differences among students are provided for within the class group and also through a broad program of service and specialized courses and laboratory activities. Guidance is an integral part of the program.

*Steps a group might take in utilizing the persistent life situations approach to curriculum development.* How would a curriculum-development group in a local situation utilize this procedure in building a new curriculum or improving one already in existence? To this question, the originators and exponents of the plan have a ready answer:

The development of a curriculum based on persistent life situations can commence in many ways. From the individual teacher, who examines his own teaching in terms of recurring problems the pupils face to see how well these are met, to a total staff studying its own processes and competencies as a step toward creating the flexibility in teaching-learning necessary for the proposed design—the springboards for curriculum planning are numerous. Possible activities for a teacher, a faculty, or some other curriculum group include the following. . . .

7 Assessing the persistent life situations learners face and building an analysis and charts as a guide to planning

Finding opportunities for increasing skills and techniques in studying learners to determine their needs

Producing or locating necessary resource materials for teaching and learning

Engaging in reality practice or role-playing to acquire and extend necessary teaching-learning skills

*Learning how to work with individual differences*

Using group processes in the classroom, differentiating materials and learning activities and otherwise recognizing and arranging for individual growth

Seeking opportunities for extending insights into community resources, structure and relationships

Utilizing opportunities for extending general education and self-understanding

Developing the conditions which encourage experimentation within the classroom and school<sup>12</sup>

**Evaluation of the persistent life situations procedure** Obviously this procedure has much to commend it. Among the significant features are these:

1. It has a well-defined and illustrated procedure for determining the scope and sequence.

2. Its use makes possible a curriculum design grounded in present-day living, yet making full use of the cultural heritage.

3. While the goal is effective adult living in our democratic society, the present living of the student is the starting point for learning; his nature, his needs, and his problems are central.

4. The scope and sequence charts developed by the authors are not intended as a fixed design but rather as an illustration of the kind of analysis a local curriculum-development group might undertake.

In spite of the commendable features set forth above, the procedure has disadvantages which a local curriculum-development group might well examine. Among them are these:

1. The plan is exceedingly complex, if not cumbersome. An analysis with as much detail as that presented by the authors would be almost impossible for any curriculum-development group to carry out within the

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 702-703. Note: Only the first three items listed above are distinctive to this procedure. All of the others might well be practiced by a group utilizing any other procedure.



limits of its time and competence. The alternative might be to accept the detailed analyses of the authors—and that course would certainly be frowned upon by them, and would negate the very principles of curriculum development set forth.<sup>22</sup>

2. The developmental level categories are so broad as to be almost meaningless. Presumably they could be more restricted but the authors of the plan apparently did not consider it feasible to do so.

3. As in the social-functions procedure, there is danger that the broad categories of major persistent life situations and life problems will become the focus of attention rather than the actual problems of youth.

4. Techniques for discovering and classifying persistent life situations and problems are not well defined.

#### V. The adolescent needs or problems procedure

This procedure came into prominence during the *Eight-Year Study* (1932–40). Significant it is that none of the schools included in this study adopted the social-functions procedure in bringing about curriculum reorganization even though it was the most widely acclaimed procedure at that time. The Virginia Program was getting under way and was much publicized. The other state and city programs discussed in the previous section were also in process of development. Why then didn't the *Eight-Year Study* schools follow suit? The answer is to be found primarily in the leadership of that study. It was sponsored by the Progressive Education Association which had long waged war upon the adult-centered curriculum. Here was an opportunity, under controlled conditions, to experiment with a conception of curriculum making that was grounded in the experimentalist philosophy of Dewey, Kilpatrick, Bode, and Thayer, and which placed youth at the center. The Commission on the Secondary School Curriculum was established for the purpose of aiding the schools in curriculum development, and Vivian T. Thayer, then Director of the Ethical Culture Schools, was made chairman. This Commission worked closely with the Commission on the Relation of School and College under the leadership of Wilford Aikin, who had been head of the John Burroughs School in Clayton, Mo.

<sup>22</sup> For a school that apparently did accept the persistent life situation framework, see: *Ibid.*, Chapter XIV.

It is unnecessary at this point to discuss the programs of the schools.<sup>21</sup> That has been done in other connections. The important point is that the *adolescent needs or problems procedure* had its beginnings in this study under the impetus of the Commission on the Secondary-School Curriculum. The needs concept, explained in Chapter IV, became the basic procedure in curriculum development that has continued to influence curriculum reorganization to the present time.

*The principle underlying this procedure is that the central emphasis of secondary education in our democratic society ought to be to help to meet the needs, solve the problems, and extend the worthy interests of the individual in such a way as to develop optimally his potentialities and to help him to an ever-increasing degree to participate with others in the progressive refinement of the culture.* This goal calls for some method of discovering and classifying the needs or problems of students—particularly those which are fairly common and thus have direct application to the curriculum in general education.

*Determining the common needs or problems of students* Here the common practice is to make a study of the literature of the field of adolescent development.<sup>22</sup> Such studies, however, need to be supplemented by local studies through the use of various means, the most common of which is the checklist or questionnaire. A problems checklist that has been used rather extensively has been developed by Ross Mooney and others.<sup>23</sup>

Three hundred and thirty problems were classified under eleven areas, as follows: (1) Health and Physical Development, (2) Finances, Living Conditions, and Employment, (3) Social and Recreational Activities, (4) Courtship, Sex, and Marriage, (5) Social-Psychological Relations, (6) Personal-Psychological Relations, (7) Morals and Religion, (8) Home and Family, (9) The Future: Vocational and Educational, (10) Adjustment to School Work, and (11) Curriculum and Teaching

<sup>21</sup> See Wilford Aikin, *The Story of the Eight-Year Study*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1941, and *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1943. See particularly the Denver, Tulsa, Horace Mann, Lincoln, and the Ohio State University School Programs. See also: Frederick Redefert, "The Eight-Year Study—After Eight Years," *Progressive Education*, XXVIII, 33-36 (November, 1950).

<sup>22</sup> See Chapter IV for reports of the results of many of these studies.

<sup>23</sup> Separate forms of this checklist for junior high school, the senior high school, and college have been developed. They are distributed by the Psychological Corporation of America.

Procedures. In the first area are included: being underweight, being overweight, not getting enough exercise, tiring too easily, frequent illnesses, frequent headaches, weak eyes, lack of appetite, digestive troubles, not getting proper diet, not as strong and healthy as I should be, not enough outdoor air and sunshine, poor complexion, frequent colds, poor teeth, poor posture, being clumsy and awkward, too short, too tall, not very attractive physically, physical handicap, afraid I may need an operation, frequent sore throat, menstrual disorders, not enough sleep, nose or sinus trouble, poor hearing, smoking, speech handicaps, and foot trouble or ill-fitting shoes. The application of this checklist shows wide diversity among high-school students. Some students check very few problems while others check a great many. In the Stephens-Lee Survey,<sup>37</sup> 98 out of the 330 problems were checked by 10 per cent or more of the students. Problems involving personal-psychological relations were checked by the greatest number of students. Problems involving morals and religion and home and family were lowest on the list.

This checklist, as has been pointed out, was made up of the actual problems that high-school students mention when they talk or write about their "worries" or concerns. The results of its use are conditioned by the fact that many students are not conscious of their problems. Hence, the problems not checked by a student are often as revealing as are the problems that he checks. Another conditioning factor is that students often are hesitant about revealing to teachers the personal problems that seem to them to be most significant. Used intelligently, however, such a checklist undoubtedly has great value to the teacher in understanding the student and helping him to plan his curriculum.

Another checklist that has been used widely in connection with the adolescent needs, or problems procedure is the SRA Youth Inventory.<sup>38</sup>

This checklist of adolescent concerns deals with "matters that have bothered teenagers all over the United States." It is made up of 298 items organized under the following major headings: (1) My School, (2) After High School?, (3) About Myself, (4) Getting Along with Others, (5) My Home and Family, (6) Boy Meets Girl, (7) Health, and

<sup>37</sup> See Ross Mooney, "Surveying High-School Students' Problems by Means of a Problems Checklist," *Educational Research Bulletin* (The Ohio State University), XXI, 57-69 (March 18, 1942).

<sup>38</sup> Published by Science Research Associates. This inventory is fairly well standardized and is easy to give and score.

(8) Things in General. To illustrate the nature of the concerns listed for checking, a few items under the general classification of *Health* are listed herewith:

- I want to gain (or lose weight)
- Is smoking harmful?
- I don't get enough sleep
- I don't hear very well
- I have frequent colds
- I wonder if I am normal in my energy and endurance<sup>39</sup>

Some schools develop their own checklist rather than use one developed on a national basis. The Ohio State University School was one of the pioneers in this field. Many years ago a committee of the teaching staff developed a very elaborate checklist<sup>40</sup> derived from several sources. *The graduating seniors were asked to list the ten most crucial individual and social problems which face young people.* Samplings were made of *students' problems at various levels. The faculty, together with a large group of adults, also prepared lists of what they considered to be the crucial problems of young people. A master list of problems was then made up under the following categories: (1) Family, (2) Vocation, (3) Pupil-teacher Relationships, (4) Our School, (5) Self-discipline, Mental Hygiene and Health, (6) Planning Work and Budgeting Time, (7) Religion, (8) General Social Relationships, (9) Sex, (10) Out-of-School Matters, (11) Skills, (12) College, (13) War, Peace, and Patriotism, (14) Social, Economic, and Political Organization, and (15) Miscellaneous Aspects of Citizenship.* To illustrate the nature of the problems presented, the various problems under Category No. 1 (The Family) are listed: getting along with brothers and sisters, making arrangements with parents so as to drive the car, arranging dates so that parents are not displeased, selecting a college to the satisfaction of parents and myself, adjusting to separation from parents or close relative for long period, learning to carry fair share of the family responsibilities (housework, spending only fair share of money, etc.), how to show appreciations of what my parents have done for me, preparing for marriage and family life, the

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>40</sup> Committee on Problems Study, *An Inventory Study of the Personal and General Social Problems of 256 Students in Grades Seven to Twelve, Inc.* Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University School, 1940.

extent to which parents should dominate our lives, the extent to which children should break away from parents, and adjusting to friends who come from families with different social habits or standards.

The conclusions resulting from the use of this inventory were these: that there are wide differences in problems from grade to grade; that no one problem or group of problems is applicable to any one grade; that at the lower levels the emphasis is upon personal, immediate problems, whereas in the higher grades (eleven and twelve) there is a marked increase in interest about world affairs and the responsibility of the individual for them; that there is little or no interest in religious problems at any level.

The results of this study, together with a study of child development,<sup>41</sup> were utilized as bases for the development of problem areas for the core program.

One difficulty with the use of student checklists is that the results are likely to yield data on the immediate concerns of youth—those which it feels keenly at the present time rather than needs or concerns of a more remote or indirect nature. There is fairly general agreement that the immediate felt needs or concerns are an inadequate, though helpful, basis for developing a curriculum.

**Techniques for establishing and organizing problem areas** How to translate the findings from studying the needs or problems of adolescents into a workable curriculum design is a difficult problem. It is possible to establish broad generalizations concerning adolescent behavior, to determine the broad problems which adolescents are likely to face as they grow up, and to define the needs or "developmental tasks" for large groups of adolescents. However, it is almost impossible to apply these findings ready-made to any individual or class, for there is wide variation in the precise expression of a need or task and in the definition of the problems of an individual or group. To presume to be able to do so is a negation of the dynamic concept of the learner and his environment. Furthermore, to impose a series of fixed problems upon youth would perpetuate the ills of the logically organized subject curriculum.

A common way of solving this knotty problem is to establish problem areas. A problem area is defined as a broad category of human living in which adolescents *usually* have problems. The particular categories util-

<sup>41</sup> See *How Children Develop*, Faculty of the University School, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1946.

ized may result from an attempt to classify the needs or problems or tasks discovered in the previous step into some workable curricular areas. More frequently they are set up empirically by groups using criteria of their own choosing, such as: What areas are suggested by the purposes of the school? What areas are implied by the known general developmental problems of youth? What areas are essential in terms of the "realities" or demands of the culture?

One of the early studies of problem areas development for a core program was made by Lurry in 1949.<sup>42</sup> The first step was to develop a set of criteria for selecting problem areas. As reported by the investigator,<sup>43</sup> this involved a review of the literature of "core program development for a period of ten years, and the judgments of thirty curriculum workers in the United States who had wide experiences with the development of core programs."<sup>44</sup> The following are the criteria which were derived from the above sources:

A problem area should:

1. Represent persistent problems of a personal-social nature common to adolescents in our culture.
2. Be adapted to the maturity level of the group.
3. Provide experiences for growth in terms of such values as tolerance, social sensitivity, co-operativeness, civic competence, aesthetic appreciations, self-direction, and critical thinking.
4. Encourage the use of the problem-solving technique to attack problems in all areas of living.
5. Provide opportunity for co-operative planning in the group, i.e., teacher-pupil, teacher-teacher, and pupil-pupil planning.
6. Provide opportunity for generalization beyond the experience of adolescents.
7. Provide opportunity for meaningful direct experiences and the enrichment of vicarious experiences by utilizing a wide variety of resources in men, materials, and techniques.
8. Provide for the integration of knowledge through the use of subject-matter as it bears upon the problem at hand.
9. Provide experiences which develop continuity in the emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects of the learning process.

<sup>42</sup> Lucile L. Lurry, *The Contributions of Home Economics to Selected Areas in the Core Curriculum of the Secondary School*, Unpublished doctoral study, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1949.

<sup>43</sup> See Lucile L. Lurry and Elsie J. Alberty, *Developing a High School Core Program*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1957.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

10. Provide opportunity for the individual and group-guidance functions of teaching, to become an integral part of the curriculum.
11. Guide the interests of individuals into the various special-interest areas.
12. Lead to other meaningful learning experiences, suggest new problem areas.

In light of these criteria, a review of the literature, and the judgments of thirty curriculum workers, sixteen problem areas were selected as a basis for the scope of an adequate core program.<sup>45</sup>

A recent study<sup>46</sup> sought to broaden the bases for determining problem areas. In attempting to determine the problems of living that were common to adolescents, Marani administered the *SRA Youth Inventory* to 10 per cent of the students of the junior and senior high schools of Sarasota, Florida. This involved 110 junior high-school students (grades seven, eight, and nine), and 132 senior high-school students (grades ten, eleven, and twelve). As a means of identifying problems of wider social significance, an unstructured problem-survey instrument was developed and administered to the students as a supplement to the inventory.

The investigator then prepared and administered a questionnaire to 117 teachers in the high schools being studied, on the theory that by virtue of their professional training and experience, teachers would be able to yield valuable data on the problems the adolescent faces in the modern world.

A third source of data was the parents of students in the schools being studied. Information was secured by means of a questionnaire sent to 10 per cent of the more than 5,000 parents, which requested information concerning the particular problems which they believed their own boys and girls faced and *should face as they grow up*. This questionnaire elicited responses from only 27 per cent of the parents from whom responses were solicited. This percentage of responses was augmented by personal interviews.

As a final step, a questionnaire was prepared and sent to twelve so-

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60. For a complete list of the problem areas and an analysis and interpretation of each, see pp. 60-90.

<sup>46</sup> Jean Victoria Marani, *A Technique for Determining Problem Areas for General Education in the Secondary School*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbus Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1958. A summary of the study is reported by Marani in: *Florida Journal of Educational Research*, II, 37-46 (January, 1960).

cial scientists in three Florida universities. This questionnaire sought the judgment of these experts on what they believed to be common and persistent problems "which are faced and should be faced by most adolescents in our society." Only five of this group responded.<sup>47</sup>

From these data the following problem areas for a program of general education were formulated:

(1) Self-Understanding; (2) Healthful Living; (3) Home and Family Living; (4) Personal-Social Relations; (5) Education and School Living; (6) Vocational Preparation; (7) Living in the Community; (8) Democratic Government; (9) Economic Understanding; (10) Relationship with Minority Groups; (11) Intercultural Understanding; (12) Finding Values by which to Live.<sup>48</sup>

It should be clear that the formulation of problem areas and their analysis is intended to provide the scope of general education in the high school. The various ways of determining sequence were discussed in Chapter VI. A point which must be emphasized again and again is that *these areas do not yield subject matter to be imposed, but rather are to be used as bases for the cooperative planning of units of work by the teacher and students.*

*Developing Resource Materials Based Upon Problem Areas.* This step is usually, but not invariably, taken by schools that utilize this technique. Each of the established problem areas is used as the basis for developing one or more resource units—defined as a *systematic and comprehensive survey, analysis, and organization of the possible resources (e.g., problems, issues, activities, bibliographies, etc.) which a teacher might utilize in planning, developing, and evaluating a learning unit.* This definition is elaborated and illustrated in Chapter XII.

*Developing learning units in the classroom.* The final step in the adolescent problems procedure is the development of cooperatively planned units in the classroom, based upon the problem areas which have been established, and the resources units (if any) which have been worked out. See Chapters IX, X, XI for a complete discussion of this step.

<sup>47</sup> For copies of the instruments mentioned above see Marani, *op. cit.*, Appendix, pp. 368-382.

<sup>48</sup> Marani, *op. cit.*, pp. 312-326, *passim*. For the analysis of these problem areas, see Chapter IV.



Steps in the adolescent needs or problems procedure. The various steps in the development of a core (Type IV) of general education program may be summarized as follows:

1. Formulate the philosophy and purposes of the school.
2. Determine the common needs (or problems) of students.
3. Establish and organize problem areas (Scope).
4. Establish a basis for determining sequence.
5. Develop resource materials based upon the problem areas.
6. Develop cooperatively planned learning units in the classroom.

*Utilizing the adolescent needs or problems procedure in the reorganization of subjects.* As has been intimated, this procedure has been more widely utilized in the development of advanced types of core programs than in subject-centered curriculums. This is natural, for subjects usually have their scope and sequence defined by the "internal logic" of the field (See Chapter V) whereas schools developing advanced type core programs cannot utilize a completely predetermined scope and sequence.

Nevertheless it is certainly possible to improve the subject-centered curriculum through the needs or problems approach. As a matter of fact the *Commission on the Secondary-School Curriculum*, to which credit has been given in this chapter for originating and popularizing this approach to curriculum development, worked in terms of fields of knowledge rather than areas of living. The reports of this Commission referred to earlier are still the best illustrations of the use of the needs or problems concept in improving the subject-centered curriculum.

*Evaluation of the adolescent needs or problems procedure* Whether or not this is to be regarded as a satisfactory procedure in curriculum development depends to a large extent upon the philosophy and purposes of the school as seen by the curriculum-development group. Some of the more important of its alleged advantages are these:

1. It provides a basis for dealing directly with the ascertained needs, problems, and interests of youth.
2. It provides a means of creating a dynamic relationship between the curriculum and guidance.
3. It provides a basic structure for utilizing the cultural heritage in solving problems of everyday living.
4. It provides for flexibility in dealing with the wide variety of individual differences among students.

5. It provides a challenge to the individual teacher to draw upon available resources in the school and community.

Obviously this procedure would be looked upon with disfavor by any group that holds that the business of education is concerned largely with mastery of bodies of logically organized subjects. These are some of the criticisms which this group would undoubtedly advance:

1. It leads to superficiality and undue reliance upon the wishes, wants, and whims of students.
2. It neglects the teaching of the fundamental skills.
3. It does not provide for logical organization of knowledge.
4. It tends to support the life-adjustment theory of education, and hence, is *non-intellectual in character*.
5. Its reliance on group activities and cooperative planning tends to contribute to the "drift" toward some form of collectivism.

#### PROCEDURES IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND THE INDIVIDUAL TEACHER

In general, procedures that are proposed for curriculum development presuppose that an entire school, or system of schools, is embarked upon a curriculum-revision program. Very frequently this situation does not prevail. What about the individual teacher who wishes to improve his work? What can he learn from the studies of curriculum procedures? Within certain limits fixed by the organization of the curriculum of the school, he may utilize either the social-functions approach, the persistent problems of living approach, or the adolescent needs or problems approach to improve his teaching. He may, for example, select and organize the learning activities in his field in such a way as to touch upon the crucial problems in *all* of the aspects of living. This would serve to broaden his work and to bring it more directly into relationship with present-day living. At the same time, he may study his students in the light of general trends in adolescent development, discover their needs, interests, and problems, and reorganize his learning activities in such a way as to help the adolescent to meet his problems, satisfy his needs, and extend and enrich his interests in light of what studies have shown to be persistent problems of living. And he may well find that the three procedures supplement each other.

## SUMMARY

Five procedures in curriculum development have been discussed in this chapter. The *first* and most common is the acceptance of authority procedure which is based on the theory that the "expert" as defined by the curriculum development group is best qualified to judge what the scope and sequence of the curriculum should be. The *second* is the scientific or analytical procedure. This grew out of the rise of the scientific movement in the early Twenties, and its application to educational problems. The *third* is the social-functions procedure which broke sharply with the authoritarian conception of the curriculum and looked to the universal functions of living for the basis of curriculum content. The *fourth*, the persistent problems of living procedure, is quite similar to the social-functions procedure in methodology, but draws more heavily and in a less formal manner on the *learners'* present-day problems. *Fifth* is the adolescent needs or problems procedure which seeks to determine and utilize the immediate and predicated needs, problems, and interests of the student as the central emphasis in curriculum development. In practice, these procedures are not necessarily discrete. Certain aspects of all of them may be drawn upon by the resourceful curriculum-development group—provided it operates with a clear definition of philosophy and goals.

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**SELECTED AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS—PART II****FILMS** (All are 16mm sound)

**BROADER CONCEPTS OF CURRICULUM.** 21 min., b&w, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Text-Film Dept., 330 W. 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.

Surveys the entire curriculum in today's secondary school and portrays ways in which the needs of youth may be served through a variety of learning experiences.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF A CORE PROGRAM.** 20 min., b&w, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York 27, N. Y.

Shows a ninth-grade core class in action and presents seven characteristics of core: mutually understood goals and procedures, units focused on areas of interest, content chosen from many subject fields, skills taught in context, wide variety of materials, guidance information utilized in teaching, and large block of scheduled time.

**CHALLENGE OF THE GIFTED.** 11 min., b&w, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., Text-Film Dept., 330 W. 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.

Illustrates an experiment undertaken by one community to deal with special problems and needs of the gifted child.

**ETERNAL CHILDREN.** 30 min., b&w, International Film Bureau, 57 E. Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois.

A study of the special problems of retarded children; shows care and training methods utilized in various Canadian schools.

**THE GIFTED ONES.** 20 min., b&w, International Film Bureau, 57 E. Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois.

Shows a class of gifted students and discusses special problems presented by education of the gifted.

**HOW GOOD ARE OUR SCHOOLS? DR. CONANT REPORTS.** 28 min., b&w or color, National Education Association, Public Relations, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

Visualized report on the U. S. high school, suggesting ways in which it can be improved according to Conant recommendations.

**FILMSTRIPS**

**GROUPING STUDENTS FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING.** 44 frames, silent, color with captions. Bel-Mort Films, Inc., 124 N. W. 9th Avenue, Portland, Oregon.

Analyzes age and ability in grouping students and also considers flexible grouping.

## RECORDINGS

EDUCATIONAL GROWTH SERIES. microgroove, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  rpm. Educational Recording Services, 5922 Abernathy Drive, Los Angeles 45, California.

A series of forty-one 36-44 minute discussions by educators on a variety of topics, all more or less applicable to teacher education programs. The following titles are particularly applicable to the material discussed in Part II of this volume

### Order Number

- 201. *Part I—The Nature and Nurture of the Gifted*, Paul F. Brandwein.  
*Part II—The Characteristics of the Teacher of the Gifted*, Paul F. Brandwein.
- 213. *Providing for Individual Differences in the Classroom*, William C. Trow.
- 226. *Foreign Language Instruction in American Schools*, Earl J. McGrath.
- 227. *Developing a Core Program in the High School*, Harold Alberty.
- 228. *The Effective Junior High School*, Myron S. Olson.
- 235. *Improving the Services of Extra Class Activities*, J. Lloyd Trump.



# *Improving the Quality of Instruction and Learning*



THE MODERN CONCEPT OF UNIT TEACHING  
IN ITS HISTORICAL SETTING



TEACHERS AND STUDENTS AT WORK: PRINCIPLES  
AND PROCEDURES



TEACHERS AND STUDENTS AT WORK: AN  
ILLUSTRATIVE UNIT

## *The Modern Concept of Unit Teaching in Its Historical Setting*



THE PROCEDURES WHICH the teacher utilizes in the classroom to implement the curriculum should, of course, be consistent with the basic philosophy, the goals, the nature of the adolescent, and the accepted theory of the learning process. It is the contention of the authors that procedures and curriculum as such should not be divorced. They should be regarded as a unit since the curriculum has significance only as it is *incorporated in on-going learning activities*. Nevertheless, it is possible, for purposes of discussion, to deal with a concept of method or procedure as an entity. Since this volume is oriented toward general rather than specific classroom practices, it seems reasonable to examine and evaluate a concept of general method which may be basic to all classroom procedures. This we propose to do in the present chapter.

### THE SOURCES OF A GENERAL METHODOLOGY

It is perhaps trite to note that teaching procedures have always been rather closely related to philosophical and psychological theory. It is no accident that the shift in psychological emphasis from the atomistic to the organismic approach to learning is paralleled by a shift in methodology from the daily ground-to-be-covered recitation system to unit teaching. Provisions for cooperative planning of learning activities in the classroom certainly can be traced to concern of educators for implementing democratic values. Emphasis upon the learner and his problems as *one basis for determining learning activities* is clearly related to what



psychology has discovered about the dynamic character of the individual and the importance of motivation in human behavior. The surprising thing is that current practices lag so far behind what is known about the nature of democracy and the learning process.<sup>1</sup> Certain it is that we now know enough about these things to move with confidence in the direction of a rather complete reconstruction of the traditional concept of classroom organization and practices.

The historical development of the modern concept of general method has been developed fully by many writers.<sup>2</sup> Our present purpose is to touch briefly upon some of the more significant experiments which have a bearing upon our problem.

The Dewey School Beginning perhaps with John Dewey's famous laboratory school, which was founded in 1896,<sup>3</sup> there have been many experiments which sought to break the lockstep of the traditional school with its daily lessons to be learned and its subject-matter ground to be covered. Dewey abandoned the traditional curriculum and based his program upon the premise that:

A child or an adult . . . learns not alone by doing but by perceiving the consequences of what he has done in their relationship to what he may or may not do in the future; he experiments, he "takes the consequences," he considers them. . . . Through the consequences of his acts are revealed both the significance, the character of his purposes, previously blind and impulsive, and the related facts and objects of the world in which he lives. In this experience knowledge extends both to the self and the world; it becomes serviceable and an object of desire. In seeing how his acts change the world about him, he learns the meaning of his own powers and the ways in which his purposes must take account of things. Without such learnings, purposes remain impulses or become mere dreams. With experience of this kind, there is that growth within experience which is all one with education.<sup>4</sup>

This brief quotation presents an important clue to the concept of general method—the problems of the learner are the starting point for

<sup>1</sup> It has been charged that educational practices lag 35 to 50 years behind educational theory. This is perhaps an overstatement.

<sup>2</sup> See: V. T. Thayer, *The Passing of the Recitation*, Boston, D. C. Heath and Co., 1928 and his later work: *The Role of the School in American Society*, New York, Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc., 1960.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter V for a general description of the Chicago laboratory school.

<sup>4</sup> Katherine C. Mayhew and Anna C. Edwards, *The Dewey School: The Laboratory School of the University of Chicago, 1896-1903*, p. 477. New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., 1936.



*Courtesy, Riverview High School Photo by John Galese*

Real life activities are valuable in enabling the student to reconstruct his experience—provided, of course, that the teacher helps him to see the implications of his experiences.

The Mathematics Research Group in the Riverview High School, Sarasota, Florida, is making surveys for the new track facilities.

*learning, rather than the mastery of a branch of knowledge. This meant that in a very real sense Dewey broke with the time-honored daily recitation procedure.*

The project method To William Heard Kilpatrick must go much of the credit for breaking the lockstep system of education. Building upon the work of Dewey and the practice of the agricultural high schools and colleges in substituting farm projects, such as raising a crop, canning fruits or vegetables, or raising a calf for the mere mastery of textbook knowledge which they were to apply later, he set forth in clear language

the possibility of applying the concept of direct experience to the life of the school. In explaining the origin of his new concept, Kilpatrick states:

In attacking with successive classes in educational theory, the problem of method, I had felt the need of unifying more completely a number of important related aspects of the educational process. I began to hope for some one concept which might serve this end. Such a concept, if found, must, so I thought, emphasize the factor of action, preferably a whole-hearted vigorous activity. It must at the same time provide a place for the adequate utilization of the laws of learning and no less for the essential elements of the ethical quality of conduct. The last named, looks of course to the social situation as well as to the individual attitude. Along with these should go, so it seemed, the important generalization that education is life, so easy to say and so hard to delimit. Could not all of these be contemplated under one workable notion? <sup>5</sup>

It seems clear that what Kilpatrick was proposing was a general method of learning and teaching that would catch up the evolving psychological concept of the learner as a dynamic purposive whole, the principle that real life activities are most potent in enabling the individual to reconstruct his experiences—that is, to learn—and the need for making the classroom an exemplification of democracy. This synthesis gives rise to his often quoted definition:

We understand the term, project, to refer to any unit of purposive experience, any instance of purposive activity where the dominating purpose, as an inner urge, (1) fixes the aim of the action, (2) guides the process, and (3) furnishes its drive, its inner motivation.<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps the best illustration of Kilpatrick's theory is provided by the almost forgotten experiment of Ellsworth Collings,<sup>7</sup> one of his graduate students. The experiment was carried out by Collings while he was County Superintendent of Schools of McDonald County, Missouri. He selected three typical one-room schools which were very much alike. One of these was designated as the "Experimental School," the others being

<sup>5</sup> William Heard Kilpatrick, "The Project Method," *Teachers College Record*, XIX, 319 (September, 1918).

<sup>6</sup> William Heard Kilpatrick, "Dangers and Difficulties of the Project Method and How to Overcome Them," *Teachers College Record*, XXII, 283 (September, 1921).

<sup>7</sup> Ellsworth Collings, *An Experiment With a Project Curriculum*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1923.

designated as the "Control Schools." The curriculum of the Control Schools was a typical subject program, taught by the familiar daily-recitation method. The Experimental School curriculum was constructed as the program developed. No use was made of existing courses of study. There was no "extrinsic" subject matter. The curriculum was based upon the "purposes" of the pupils. These had to meet three criteria as follows: "(1) Does the purpose genuinely grip boys and girls? (2) Does the proposed purpose lend itself to successful realization on the part of boys and girls? (3) Does the proposed purpose prospectively lead to other and different lines of purposes in the process of its realization?"<sup>8</sup>

Space does not permit an extended discussion of the activities which were carried on by the different groups. It is sufficient to report that all were of a very practical nature and were proposed by the pupils or accepted by them after having been suggested by the teacher. The following are examples of these activities, selected at random from Collings' list. (1) Why Mrs. Murphy grows sun flowers along the rear end of her vegetable garden; (2) How tomatoes are canned at the local canning factory; (3) How the hornet builds his nest in the woods; (4) How men's shirts are made at the Joplin shirt factory; (5) How Mr. Smith cares for prisoners at the county jail; (6) Making a watering trough for chickens; (7) Dramatizing *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

It should be emphasized that the entire curriculum was based upon activities of this type. When a game or perhaps a "hand" project revealed the necessity for counting or for the use of multiplication, such material was presented. When a study of why Mr. Smith had typhoid in his home revealed the necessity for knowledge of diseases, hygiene, and sanitation, reference books along these lines were studied. When the pupils attended a campaign speech by presidential candidate Cox on the League of Nations, the need for a knowledge of current events and American and world history was apparent, and the students turned to their geographies, histories, and to current periodicals for material to clear up the problems and issues.

At the beginning of the experiment, the pupils of all the schools involved were tested as to intelligence level and school progress in the fundamental facts and skills. The testing was by means of standardized instruments. At the end of the four-year experimental period, the pupils

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 329.

were again tested by means of different forms of the same tests. In addition, an attempt was made to determine the effect of the activities of the Experimental School upon certain phases of community life and upon the attitudes of the pupils and parents toward the school and the community.

The results of the experiment indicated the overwhelming superiority of the Experimental School over the Control Schools. In other words, when the outcomes were measured by tests designed for the *traditional* curriculum, the school which followed the methodology of the project was far in the lead. Not only in the acquisition of the ordinary facts and skills did the Experimental School show its superiority, but also in the marked improvement of the conduct of pupils out of school and in the attitudes of parents toward the school and education in general.

This experiment has been dwelt upon at some length because of its historical significance. The results have been confirmed by more than thirty years of careful experimentation.<sup>9</sup>

The implications of the experiment for general method seem clear enough. They point to a methodology which breaks with the daily recitation system by subordinating the time-block to the job to be done or the purpose to be served. It is also possible to identify various stages in the development of the project such as "purposing, planning, executing, and judging."<sup>10</sup> These stages, according to Kilpatrick, are "typical steps in a purposeful enterprise." These steps, it should be noted, correspond rather closely to Dewey's "Complete Act of Thought" which was discussed in Chapter III. *Purposing* and *planning* may be identified with Dewey's initial steps in thinking, which embrace the location and definition of the felt difficulty (problem) and the formulation of one or more hypotheses. *Execution* corresponds to the gathering of data and the application of the data to the hypotheses—to the solution of the problem. *Judging* is closely related to the final phases of the complete act of thought in which the solution of the problem is tested through action.

Kilpatrick makes it clear that these steps are applicable not only to individual action but also to group situations. For, he points out, "If the group does as a group perform each step with reasonable whole-hearted-

<sup>9</sup> For example, see J. Paul Leonard and Alvin Eurich, *An Evaluation of Modern Education*, New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., 1942.

<sup>10</sup> See William Heard Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method*, Chapter XIII, "Purposeful Activity: The Complete Act," New York, the Macmillan Company, 1925.

ness, jointly and singly, as the lawyers say, then I should say we have a joint or group complete act of thought."<sup>11</sup> In other words, Kilpatrick saw in his analysis a way of organizing the total life of the classroom in such a way as to promote more effective learning. In a broad sense, this classroom procedure was applicable to *all* situations. Specific techniques for carrying on drill, for learning the fundamentals, would be utilized within the framework of the "purposeful group enterprise."

Thus in the early Twenties was laid the foundation for a new and fresh way of dealing with classroom learning. Not only was the theory well developed, it had also been carried forward successfully into school practice, even though the psychological documentation was rather sketchy until the early Thirties when the experiments of the organismic psychologists began to influence the thinking of leaders in education.

At the same time that the foundations for a general classroom methodology were being laid by Dewey, Kilpatrick, Collings, and others and carried into practice in many "progressive" elementary schools under the banner of the Progressive Education Association which was founded in 1918, other movements which were to make a contribution to classroom practices were under way.

**Individualized instruction** Even before Dewey established his laboratory school at the University of Chicago in 1896, Preston Search set up his plan of individualized instruction in Pueblo, Colorado (1888). He abolished the daily recitation system and permitted students to advance at their individual rates of speed. Frederic Burk seems to have been the first educator to systematize a plan for individualizing instruction. The scheme was worked out in the training school of the San Francisco State College in 1913. The staff developed self-instructional materials which were placed in the hands of students. Group assignments and recitations were entirely abolished and each student advanced through the prepared written assignments at his own rate of speed. The teacher checked his progress and helped him with his difficulties. When the student had finished a particular assignment, he was tested upon it and, if he had mastered it, he was given a new one. The plan seems to have met with considerable success. It remained for two educators who came under Burk's influence, however, to refine and popularize the basic ideas of individualized instruction. Helen Parkhurst developed and installed the Dalton

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 215.

Plan in the public schools of Dalton, Massachusetts, and later in the Dalton School of New York City (1920), where certain of its original features are still in use. Carleton Washburne applied the technique with similar modifications to the elementary schools of Winnetka, Illinois (1919).

These plans contributed largely in a negative way to the development of a concept of general method. Their greatest contribution perhaps was to call attention to the inadequacies of the daily-recitation system and to the need for giving attention to individual differences among students—especially in respect to *rates* of learning. They were, however, far in advance of their time and are worthy of study by serious students of education from an historical point of view.<sup>12</sup> Neither plan was widely used in public schools. They had little effect upon either the curriculum or the teaching procedures of the vast majority of secondary schools. Both plans were rejected by many of the so-called progressives as being too mechanical and as too far removed from the purposes of the learner.

**The Morrison plan** At the same time that Kilpatrick was developing and popularizing the project method and new techniques for providing for individualized instruction were being evolved, another educator, Henry C. Morrison, was working experimentally at the Laboratory School of the University of Chicago along quite a different line. The exposition of his teaching procedure was published in 1926 under the impressive title: *The Practice of Teaching in the Secondary School*. This volume sets forth the results of six years of experimentation on the part of Morrison and his staff.

It is difficult to find in Morrison's published work any traces of the influences of Dewey or Kilpatrick who were, at the very period of experimentation, exerting a profound influence upon American education, especially at the elementary level. Rather Morrison seems to have taken his point of departure from the Herbartian psychology, even though there is no direct reference to Herbart in the published report.

His plan is based on the theory that the traditional school has made the serious mistake of assuming that "assimilative materials" in the form of lessons to be learned, or subject matter to be covered, are the true

<sup>12</sup> Many similarities between these plans and the various proposals for programmed learning advanced today are evident. These present programs, like their predecessors, permit students to advance at their own rates and provide for continuous reinforcement.

learning products Morrison holds that genuine learning is an actual change in the behavior of the learner. This change, borrowing from biology, he designates as an *adaptation*.

The fact that adaptations are regarded as unitary, and as such are either acquired *in toto* or not acquired at all, is the base upon which Morrison builds most of his teaching techniques. Since education is held to consist of a series of successive unitary adaptations, it follows that an appropriate teaching procedure for acquiring them must be set up. Hence the job of the curriculum maker is twofold. He must first discover or formulate the adaptations which in the social evolution of the culture have aided man in his long climb toward civilization; and second, he must devise appropriate procedures for translating these racial learnings into the day-to-day behavior of the student.<sup>13</sup>

Morrison's greatest contribution to general method is his "science-type" procedure, even though it is only one of five different procedures which he describes. This procedure is held to be appropriate for use whenever the learning product to be acquired is an *attitude of understanding*, usually expressed as a generalization. When the student has grasped the appropriate generalization and can apply it to new situations, he is assumed to have achieved an attitude of understanding—an adaptation has taken place.

The unit is the vehicle used by Morrison for teaching the required adaptations. He defines a unit as "some significant and comprehensive aspect of the environment, of an organized science, of an art, or of conduct, which being learned results in an adaptation in personality."<sup>14</sup>

Morrison illustrates his definition by means of a unit in the field of general science entitled, "Our Water Supply." This, Morrison points out, is an important and significant aspect of the environment for everyone. It is a totality rather than a fragment. It requires the mastery of principles, facts, and processes if the student is to gain an attitude of understanding which will change his behavior toward the world in which he lives.

Perhaps the meaning of the unit as defined by Morrison can be clarified by considering the characteristics of a good teaching unit as set forth

<sup>13</sup> Morrison's educational views place him philosophically as a *social evolutionist*, as defined by Joseph Justman, *Theories of Secondary Education in the United States*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1940, pp. 318-339.

<sup>14</sup> Henry C. Morrison, *The Practice of Teaching in the Secondary School*, Revised Edition, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1931, pp. 24-25.



by E. R. Breslich, one of Morrison's colleagues in the University of Chicago Laboratory School:

1. It is a body of closely related facts and principles so organized as to contribute to the understanding of an important aspect of the course.
2. It must be possible to present the unit as a whole in a form so concise as to give the learner a clear conception of it before he undertakes to study it.
3. The objectives must be so definitely stated that they are clear not only to the teacher but also to the pupil. The learning products must be known.
4. All pupils qualified to take the course must be able to master the minimum essentials necessary and sufficient to attain complete understanding of the unit. In addition to this minimum, the unit must contain supplementary materials to allow freedom in adapting the work to the individual differences of the pupils.<sup>15</sup>

The applications of Morrison's definition and Breslich's criteria of a good teaching unit may best be understood by sketching briefly the five steps in one of Morrison's favorite units, "Our Water Supply," which, as has been pointed out earlier, satisfied the requirements of his definition.

The teacher's first task is to determine the present experiences of the student which have a bearing upon the new learning to be acquired and at the same time to provide the information needed by the teacher to do a good job of presenting the unit. This information may be secured by means of a pre-test or oral discussion. This first phase of the procedure is appropriately called *exploration*. This step would vary from thirty minutes to several periods, depending upon the extent of the experience of the students with the subject matter of the unit.<sup>16</sup>

The next step, the *presentation*, is the teacher's opportunity to present, perhaps in the form of a lecture, the broad outlines of the unit. He

<sup>15</sup> E. R. Breslich, "The Unit in Mathematics," *Junior-Senior High School Clearing House*, V, 324-325 (February, 1931).

<sup>16</sup> The reader will note the similarity in terminology and procedure of the various steps proposed by Morrison, and the steps in the Herbartian procedure, which are usually listed as follows: (1) Preparation, (2) Presentation, (3) Comparison and Abstraction, (4) Generalization, and (5) Application. It should be noted, however, that there is one significant difference. The Morrisonian steps applied to an extended unit of work covering many periods. See Harold Albery and Vivian T. Thayer, *Supervision in the Secondary School*, Boston; D. C. Heath and Co., 1931, pp. 308-310; William Chandler Bagley, *The Educative Process*, The Macmillan Company, 1920, Chapters XIX and XX.

presents the material in the form of generalizations and basic facts, leaving out the details. For example, the general principles upon which the pump is based—density, pressure, etc.—would be presented as essential to the acquisition of the new understanding. The test of mastery is the student's ability to apply these new principles in such a way as to exercise more intelligent control over his environment. As Morrison expresses it, "The teacher approaches the task of imparting, in its major essentials, in a single period if possible, the understanding which is the unit. In brief, through direct, convincing oral presentation he teaches the unit itself."<sup>17</sup>

At the close, a presentation test is given to determine whether or not the essentials have registered. If the essentials have failed to register, a re-presentation is given. Contrary to the usual, ground-to-be-covered procedure, the students have had, up to this point, no assignment. The assignment actually takes place in the next step.

The students are now ready for step three, *assimilation*, which may require several days or a number of weeks. Upon the basis of the first two steps, the teacher assigns reference material, suggestions for study, etc., usually by means of a mimeographed "guide sheet," helps the students over difficult places, and stimulates those who are capable of doing so to work on a voluntary project or problem as evidence of their ability to pursue an independent interest. In the unit under discussion, appropriate reference material and apparatus dealing with pumps and other aspects of the water supply would be placed at the disposal of the class. With the aid of the guide sheets, they would use these materials for the purpose of understanding and mastering the generalizations which the teacher presented earlier. One student might, as a voluntary project, construct a pump, another might delve deeply into the problems of municipal ownership and control, while a third might go deeply into the historical evolution of water supply systems. The extent of these voluntary activities is limited only by the interests of the students and the time which may be properly spent upon the unit. In this way, the "slack-time" which results from individual differences in rates of learning is taken up. When the teacher has decided that all of the students have mastered the minimum essentials, the assimilation period comes to a close.

The group is now ready for the fourth step, *organization*. Here the

<sup>17</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

purpose is to get the students to demonstrate that they have acquired the new understanding. Usually the period takes the form of a comprehensive test in which the students are required to organize all of the significant data which they have discovered in terms of the new understanding which they have gained. A further purpose of the organization period is to afford the students valuable training in developing the ability to write coherent and effective English. Finally, the organization is designed to further the establishment of the new attitude.

The fifth and final step is called the *recitation*, which consists usually of oral presentations by different members of the class, group discussions, "floor talks," "written recitations," and applications of the understandings to different situations. This step is intended to provide final and complete evidence that learning has actually taken place.

Morrison gives little place to the setting up of problem situations, to student purposing, to teacher-student planning, to the development of the adaptations which are essential to effective adjustment in our society. The method has its roots in the passive psychology of Herbart and in the social evolutionary conception of society. The central emphasis is upon adaptation of the individual *to* the evolving society rather than upon interaction *with* it. What then is Morrison's contribution to modern methodology? Certainly if it is to be found at all, it will be outside the main stream of dynamic human development fostered by Dewey and the experimentalist school of thought.

Morrison undoubtedly has performed a distinct service to American education in helping to distinguish between the shadow and the substance in learning. We can no longer regard mere ground to be covered as a desirable educational objective. The current emphasis upon generalizations as the basic learning products is akin to Morrison's concept of adaptation. He has also made a contribution to education by systematizing a procedure for providing for individual differences which can be utilized by individual teachers even though the teaching staff as a whole is not committed to a common philosophy or teaching procedure. Perhaps even a greater contribution is his attempt to present a workable concept of the nature of the learning unit. Here he has pointed the way, not only to a new method of selecting and organizing learning activities, but also to a general teaching procedure which offers promise of an escape from the deadly routine of the daily recitation method.

**The Miller plan** Another attempt in the third decade of the century

to bridge the gap between the growing body of theory regarding individual differences, the organismic nature of the individual, the need for giving attention to new concepts of thinking and the transfer of training, and the formalism of the recitation method, was developed by H. L. Miller<sup>18</sup> and his colleagues at the University of Wisconsin High School. His plan bears some resemblance in general form to that of Morrison, but gives much more place to the evolving dynamic concepts of philosophy and psychology. He proposed that units be set up in the form of "contracts" or challenges. The teacher first introduced the students to the unit which was based upon some broad generalization such as "Plants Need Water." The teacher then permitted the students to choose among three contracts. The "F Contract" represented the lowest level of understanding which all students must master; the "G Contract" included, in addition, capacity to utilize and apply the basic generalizations; the "E Contract" called for more novel applications of the generalizations to new situations. These contracts were made the basis for grading—the student receiving the grade of *Fair*, *Good*, or *Excellent* in terms of the completion of the corresponding contract or assignment.

This plan seemed to possess excellent possibilities for providing for individual differences both in abilities and rates of learning. The ideas were adopted by many teachers, but the plan failed to survive even in the University of Wisconsin High School. By the middle Thirties it had entirely disappeared from the educational scene.

It has been shown that the first three decades of the twentieth century marked a period of great change in educational thinking, particularly in the field of general method. Educators, by and large, rejected the daily recitation procedure as being incompatible with the new theories of learning and the results of experiments in the newer methodology. This does not mean, however, that the rank and file of teachers accepted and practiced this methodology. They continued to assign daily lessons from the adopted textbook.

The contributions of Thayer V. T. Thayer was impressed by the shift in emphasis which was taking place and in 1928 attempted to synthesize the major findings in philosophy, psychology, and teaching procedures into a general procedure applicable to all types of learning activ-

<sup>18</sup> See H. L. Miller and R. T. Hargreaves, *The Self-Directed School*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925, and H. L. Miller, *Creative Learning and Teaching*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927.

ities. His published work<sup>19</sup> is undoubtedly the clearest interpretation of the new trends that were well under way. His optimism is evidenced in the following statement:

And so, gradually, the conception of schooling has come to mean not merely preparation for adult life but an integral part of child life itself. At first, as we have seen, it consisted in little more than formal instruction within a very limited field. The textbook dominated the situation and the master's duty was summed up in the injunction to see that pupils "learned" their lessons. Education has now broadened out to include a first-hand concern for a pupil's growth. It attempts to define very definitely the outcome of schooling in terms of objectives of growth and development, traits of character for which subject matter and school activities are means, not ends. As means, however, school experiences are supremely important and they are scrutinized carefully with reference to the ends they are designed to realize. This concern for ends, with development as against the acquisition of information, is leading to an increased sensitiveness to other factors in the learning situation to such an extent that teachers appreciate as never before the significance of the subtle lines of influence between home, school, and community.

The realization of the intimate connection of many factors in the learning situation and the conception of education through and for behavior as against education for information, rests upon a theory of learning which likewise contrasts with that which prevailed in our early schools.<sup>20</sup>

At the time that Thayer wrote the above, the formulations of the organismic psychologists as to the wholeness of human personality and of the learning process had not been clearly developed, but the atomistic point of view of Thorndike had been successfully challenged by the work of Jennings,<sup>21</sup> and the basic principles of gestalt psychology had been formulated by Koffka.<sup>22</sup> Enough was known for Thayer to be able to write:

We thus see that the conception of learning as an activity controlled and directed both from within and without leads to educational methods which

<sup>19</sup> V. T. Thayer, *The Passing of the Recitation*, Boston, D. C. Heath and Company, 1928.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>21</sup> H. S. Jennings, *Prometheus, or Biology and the Advancement of Man*, New York, E. P. Dutton and Company, 1925. (Note: *His Biological Basis of Behavior* did not appear until 1930.)

<sup>22</sup> Kurt Koffka, *The Growth of the Mind*, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1925. (Note: The work of Wheeler and Perkins, Lashley and Coghill had not been reported at the time of Thayer's writing.)

contrast with the early precepts of teaching. It places in the foreground an appeal to the genuine interests of children as starting points for instruction and it defines the outcomes of education in terms of interests, i.e., dynamic ideals and habits. It recognizes that curriculum materials cannot center exclusively upon adult values, that they must be organized with reference to the findings of both psychology and sociology. It no longer conceives of subject matter and method as separate, but urges that each school subject be organized and taught with an eye to its content and procedure values.<sup>23</sup>

Against the background of philosophy and psychology, Thayer placed the results of three decades of experimentation in teaching procedures designed to provide for individual differences and came forward with a teaching plan to accelerate "the passing of the recitation." His plan for group and individual instruction has three steps. The first one is *planning and assignment*. Here the teacher plans tentatively the work of the unit and makes the assignment to the class. This assignment has for its central purpose the "identification of the pupil's purposes with those of the teacher." In doing this, the teacher presents an overview of the unit and provides for the sense of direction needed by the students in their individual and group undertakings. The assignment phase ends when most of the students are ready to start work. It will continue with the others, perhaps into the period which follows, as occasion demands. The second step is known as the *working period*, during which the students will work together on group undertakings, but the good teacher will see opportunities for individuals and small groups to work on problems and projects in terms of their own interests and capacities. This is especially true of the more talented students who can progress more rapidly. It is essential, however, that the results of these "side excursions" be made known to the group as a whole.<sup>24</sup> During this period the teacher studies his students, their interests and needs, and helps each one to develop what is for him the best method of work. He encourages individual students to pursue their special interests and to achieve higher levels of learning. Mastery of the common essentials of the unit is insisted upon for all students, though it is probably unlikely that any two students will achieve precisely the same degree of mastery. Thayer emphasizes again and again the flexible character of the period and urges the teacher to adapt his material and methods to the group. Guide sheets indicating the work to be covered are recommended. The period as a rule closes

<sup>23</sup> Thayer, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-144.

<sup>24</sup> See *Ibid.*, p. 303.

with some kind of a test which has for its chief purpose "the organization of the work thus far engaged upon." Borrowing from the contributions of the socialized recitation, the author utilizes the term, the *socialized period*, to describe the third and final step of his procedure. Here again there are no fixed directions to follow. In general, the period will consist of discussion by students, summaries of the general principles involved, floor talks, individual and sub-group reports of special problems or projects undertaken, and a general tie-up of the various aspects of the unit. It will also be utilized for the purpose of discussing the new work to be undertaken.<sup>25</sup> Aside from a lack of emphasis upon cooperative teacher-student planning in the first step, Thayer's proposal, made in 1928, seems quite up to date at the present time. As a matter of fact, in his most recent work, *The Role of the School in American Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 307-308, he modifies only slightly the phases. For the *socialized period* in the earlier formulation he substitutes the *evaluation period*, but the functions are essentially the same. He does, however, place greater stress upon democratic group processes, teacher-student planning, and the relationship of the "lesson" to democratic values and "intellectual discipline."

**Practice lags** From the discussion up to this point it seems fair to conclude that by 1930 the essentials of a new classroom procedure had been formulated. Was this new procedure accepted and practiced in high schools generally? The answer is well known to all students of education. The well-known lag between theory and practice was in evidence. In spite of the crusading spirit of the exponents of the new methodology, in practice the various plans which possessed distinct features tended to lose their identity. When Billett<sup>26</sup> made his comprehensive study of unit teaching in 1932 he found that a large number of plans which claimed to be distinctive differed in name only. He found no essential differences in practice between "long-unit assignments, individualized instruction, the contract plan, the problem method, and the project method."<sup>27</sup>

Many teachers who claimed to be using some sort of unit plan were

<sup>25</sup> For a complete discussion of this plan, see Thayer, *op. cit.*, Chapters XIX-XXI.

<sup>26</sup> Roy O. Billett, *Provisions for Individual Differences, Marking and Promotion*, National Survey of Secondary Education, Office of Education Bulletin, 1932, No. 17, Monograph No. 13, Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1933.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 330.

combining it with daily assignments which largely cancelled the values which might have accrued from a systematic use of unit-planning practices. Some textbook writers climbed onto the bandwagon and substituted "units" for chapter headings. By and large the daily ground-to-be-covered method with textbook assignment of lessons continued to dominate secondary-school teaching. As Billett pointed out, "In most schools, the unit assignment is a decided innovation functioning in a small number of subjects, often in only one subject."<sup>28</sup> The reasons for this situation are not difficult to discover. Among them are these:

1. The advances in methodology were not accompanied by corresponding advances in curriculum design.
2. The newer formulations of the nature of learning were slow in penetrating the teacher-education institutions.
3. The textbook system was deeply entrenched.
4. The socioeconomic situation was confused, and as a consequence interfered with basic thinking about educational foundations.

It has been pointed out that by 1930 the foundations for a new concept of learning and teaching had been laid. This concept was based upon the basic values of democracy which the schools were to implement, upon the new dynamic psychology of learning and transfer, and upon a quarter of a century of experimentation in the classroom.

**The Eight-Year Study** The period between 1930 and the close of World War II was characterized largely by clarifying, extending, and implementing what had already been learned. Naturally much of this implementation took the form of curriculum reorganization since the new concept of teaching and learning in our democratic culture called for a different kind of learning experience and a different kind of curricular organization.

*The Progressive Education Association* launched a series of far-reaching studies in the area of secondary education. Some of these will be described briefly.

*The Commission on the Relation of School and College*, founded and directed by Wilford Aikin, set up the *Eight-Year Study* to test the hypothesis that secondary schools could change their curriculums drastically and still prepare students effectively for college. Some thirty schools

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 331.



were selected for the experiment upon the basis of their willingness and capacity for experimentation. Largely because of the influence of Boyd H. Bode, who was a member of the directing committee, these schools became sensitive to the development and implementation of a philosophy of education based upon democratic values. All or nearly all of them were committed to cooperative teacher-student planning as a basis of selecting and carrying forward learning activities. Most of them carried on systematic programs of guidance and evaluation. Many of them experimented with new patterns of general education. At the close of the study (1942), the staff, which was made up of representatives of secondary schools and colleges, made the following report:

In a comparison of 1475 matched pairs (of students) the Follow-up Staff found that the graduates of the Thirty Schools:

1. earned a slightly higher total grade average;
2. earned higher grade averages in all subject fields except foreign languages;
3. specialized in the same academic fields as did the comparison students;
4. did not differ from the comparison group in the number of times they were placed on probation;
5. received slightly more academic honors in each year;
6. were more often judged to possess a high degree of intellectual curiosity and drive;
7. were more often judged to be precise, systematic and objective in their thinking;
8. were more often judged to have developed clear and well-formulated ideas concerning the meaning of education—especially in the first two years of college;
9. more often demonstrated a high degree of resourcefulness in meeting new situations;
10. did not differ from the comparison group in ability to plan their time effectively;
11. had about the same problems of adjustment as the comparison group, but approached their solution with greater effectiveness;
12. participated somewhat more frequently, and more often enjoyed appreciative experiences in the arts;
13. participated more in all organized student groups except religious and service activities;
14. earned in each college year a higher percentage of non-academic honors (officership in organizations, election to managerial societies, athletic insignia, leading roles in dramatic and musical presentations);

15. did not differ from the comparison group in the quality of adjustment to their contemporaries;
16. differed only slightly from the comparison group in the kinds of judgment about their schooling;
17. had a somewhat better orientation toward the choice of a vocation;
18. demonstrated a more active concern for what was going on in the world.<sup>29</sup>

The outline of a general teaching procedure emerges. The contributions of the *Eight-Year Study* to general classroom procedure or method are many and varied. While not all of the schools made significant changes in their programs, most schools did become more sensitive to the need for working out classroom procedures which were more consistent with the aims and purposes which they accepted. Since their aims included the development of such behavior characteristics as open-mindedness, creativeness and imagination, the power and habit of analysis, the habit of reaching conclusions on the basis of valid evidence, and social concern and acceptance of responsibility, classroom procedures were initiated which were regarded as most likely to lead to these goals. Teacher-student planning, cooperative group work and evaluation, and individual and small group problems and projects were the logical tools to use to develop these characteristics.

Since the daily assignment-recitation technique was ill-adapted to these purposes, it was abandoned in favor of long-term unit planning, which had several distinguishable characteristics. The first was *setting the problem*. Usually this was done upon the basis of standards or criteria accepted by the group. The curriculum consultants of the study submitted the following list as typical questions which the group might ask concerning a proposed topic, unit, or problem:

1. Is our activity appropriate for the maturity level of the group?
2. Does it lead on and extend the horizons of the members of the group?
3. Does it provide opportunities for developing intelligent scientific attitudes?
4. Does it provide for individual initiative?
5. Does it provide for group activities?
6. Does it encourage the use of a large variety of materials for expres-

<sup>29</sup> Wilford Aikin, *The Story of the Eight-Year Study*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1942, pp. 110-112. See also Dean Chamberlin and Others, *Did They Succeed in College?*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1943.

sion—talking, writing, painting, modeling, dramatizing, singing, dancing, and so forth?

7. Does it bring to the fore fundamental social issues that are significant to the members of the group?
8. Do we enjoy it?<sup>20</sup>

These questions give a clue to the succeeding steps in the generalized method. After the problem, unit, or topic was agreed upon, plans were made for carrying on the activities. We might call this the *work period*. According to the consultants, such an extended work period should include:

1. Whole group planning and work on a topic which is big enough to include the actual interests and needs of the group as a whole.
2. Smaller group planning and work on such phases of the topic as seem natural and profitable temporary divisions for intensive research.
3. Individual planning and work both on special aspects of the subdivisions and on other interests which may not be closely connected with the topic at hand.<sup>21</sup>

This step recognized the need both for group and individual activities—group work in terms of common needs and individual work in terms of particular needs and interests. This practice obviated the necessity of homogeneous grouping which had swept the country in the Twenties and early Thirties, with generally disappointing results.

The commitment of the schools to teacher-student planning naturally led to the third and final step. Provision was made for bringing the study to a close through individual and group reports, dramatizations, forums, and the like, and for evaluation of the outcomes.<sup>22</sup> This step has come to be called the *culminating phase*.

Thus the *Eight-Year Study* documented the need for a clean break with the daily recitation which the pioneers of the Thirties demanded. Unfortunately the reports of the study came at a time when the entire nation was involved in a death struggle against totalitarianism. Conse-

<sup>20</sup> H. H. Giles, S. P. McCutchen, and A. N. Zechiel, *Exploring the Curriculum*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1942, p. 128. See also the accounts of the different schools in: *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1943.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 112–113.

<sup>22</sup> See Eugene Smith and Ralph Tyler, *Appraising and Recording Student Progress*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1943.

quently it did not receive the attention it deserved. The impact upon the rank and file of secondary schools was very slight indeed. Teachers, by and large, went on assigning daily lessons from textbooks.

In addition to the experimental program of the schools of the *Eight-Year Study*, the period beginning about 1930 and extending to World War II was rich in curriculum-development programs which broke with the daily recitation system and established new patterns of curriculums and classroom procedures. One of the best known of these programs was inaugurated in Virginia in 1931.<sup>32</sup>

The program, developed by the Virginia State Department of Public Instruction under the leadership of Sidney B. Hall and Hollis L. Caswell, broke completely with the daily ground-to-be-covered conception of education and organized the program around units of work. A unit of work was defined as follows:

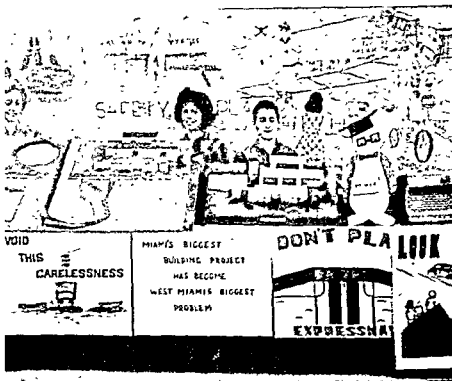
. . . a series of related activities engaged in by children in the process of realizing a dominating purpose which was compatible with the aims of education. It will be noted that this definition has three determining aspects:

- a. A dominating purpose on the part of children, compatible with the aims of education;
- b. A series of related activities engaged in by the children under the guidance of the teacher to realize their purpose.
- c. The evaluation of these activities by the children<sup>34</sup>

The Virginia program set the pattern for state, county, and city-wide curriculum development programs. Best known among them are Kansas, California, Mississippi, Georgia, Santa Barbara City, Santa Barbara County, Fort Worth, Texas, and Burbank, California. Most of these programs functioned most effectively at the elementary level where the subject-matter tradition was not so firmly entrenched, but even here the attempt to change met with great resistance, because of lack of preparation of teachers and administrators to carry on the new programs, inadequate public-relations programs, and inadequate materials of instruction.

<sup>32</sup> See Henry Harap, *et al.*, *The Changing Curriculum*, New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1937; Chapter IX; Hollis L. Caswell and Doak Campbell, *Curriculum Development*, New York, The American Book Company, 1935.

<sup>34</sup> Sidney B. Hall, D. W. Peters, and Hollis L. Caswell, *Procedures for Virginia State Curriculum Program*, Bulletin of the State Board of Education, Vol. 15, Richmond, State Department of Education, 1932, p. 129. See Chapter VIII of this volume for a discussion of this program.



*Courtesy, Dade County, Florida, Public Schools Photo by F. Edgar Lane*

Conservation units are very frequently a part of the general education program. Usually they are taught in large time-blocks and draw upon several fields of knowledge.

A group of seventh-grade students in West Miami (Florida) Junior-High School. They are arranging a display of a special project on safety in connection with a conservation unit.

However, even though most of these programs failed to survive World War II, important lessons in educational method were learned from them. A large body of experience in the organization of units of work was gained. Increasing use was made of teacher-student planning. A new concept of evaluation in terms of cooperatively developed goals and values found expression.

World War II put an end to the spirited drive toward curriculum reorganization and consequently to experimentation with the newer classroom procedures. As a matter of fact there was a marked tendency to retreat to traditional patterns in which teachers felt more secure. However, with the close of the war, a number of important developments got

under way, the total effects of which cannot yet be evaluated. Two of these developments will only be mentioned at this point in our discussion, since they are discussed fully in other chapters.

**Some recent developments** In 1944, the Educational Policies Commission brought forth its proposal for reorganizing the high-school curriculum upon the basis of the "ten imperative needs of youth."<sup>35</sup>

From one-half to two-thirds of the school day was to be given over to a program of "common learnings" organized without reference to conventional subject lines. Undoubtedly this proposal created a new interest in unit planning and teaching, since textbooks based upon logically organized systems of knowledge were unsuited to the new program. Recent studies indicate that an increasing number of schools—especially at the junior high-school level—are utilizing block-time classes,<sup>36</sup> many of which correlate or fuse subjects, or deal directly with crucial problems of living, drawing upon subjects as needed. Usually these schools organize some or all of their general education programs in terms of units of work which do not depart significantly from the early descriptions of units—even though much controversy still centers around the concept of unit teaching and the steps that are employed in carrying a unit to completion.

**The nature of the unit** Distinctions have been made between subject-matter units and experience units involving verification and discovery, normative units, and units of criticism.<sup>37</sup> The authors tend to agree with Burton that it is futile to attempt to distinguish between different types of units. He presents a definition which seems to be adequate for almost any type of situation. But let him summarize "a long story":

A unit is any combination of subject-matter content and outcomes, and thought processes, combined in learning experiences suited to the maturity and needs of the learners, which clearly serves the needs of those learners; which is a whole with internal consistency determined by immediate and ultimate goals.

<sup>35</sup> *Education for All American Youth*, Washington, Educational Policies Commission, 1944. (See also the revised edition—*Education For All American Youth—A Further Look*, 1952.) An excellent pictorial summary of the above volume has been published by the National Association of Secondary-School Principals under the title: *Planning for American Youth*.

<sup>36</sup> See Chapter VI.

<sup>37</sup> B. Othanel Smith, "The Normative Unit," *Teachers College Record*, XLV, 219-228 (January, 1945).

The basic assumptions are:

The important thing is to provide a combination of subject matter and of process which will have real value for the learner, that is, aid him in continuously integrating his learning.

Integration by the learner is aided sometimes by one thing, sometimes by another.

Emphasis either upon subject matter or upon experience will be determined by the levels of maturity, the experiential background, the purposes, needs, and interests of the learner. These factors inescapably determine which experiences will be educative, that is, will enhance the integrating growth of the learner.

The education of *little children*, of *beginners* on almost any level, and of classes in the area of *general education* will proceed best via units wherein direct experience predominates over the vicarious. The purposes and immediate needs of the learners will largely determine the amount and complexity of the subject matter to be included and the degree of attention to be given to processes of study or thought.

The education of students who have *adequate reading ability*, who have achieved sufficient maturity to *learn* through verbal abstractions, and who are entering upon *areas of specialization* which involve a look into the future will proceed best via units in which greater use is made of vicarious experience. Ultimate social goals and the more remote personal goals, with due regard for the necessity for challenge now, will determine the amount and complexity of subject matter and the degree of attention to be given to processes of study or thought.<sup>38</sup>

The steady growth of unit teaching in the areas of elementary, general secondary, and the specialized fields of secondary education, indicates that the movement which began at the turn of the century has considerable vitality, and provides support for a workable concept of general method.

The contribution of group process Another movement which has thrown considerable light on the nature of general method has become known as *group dynamics* or *group processes*. Pioneer studies of the

<sup>38</sup> William H. Burton, Ronald B. Kimball and Richard L. Wing, *Education for Effective Thinking*, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960, pp. 314-315. (Italics in original.) The above position was first set forth in 1944, reemphasized in 1952, and reiterated in 1960. For other definitions and interpretations see: Leonard H. Clark and Irving Starr, *Secondary School Teaching Methods*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1959, Chapter V; Ralph K. Watkins, *Techniques of Secondary School Teaching*, New York, The Ronald Press Company, 1958 (entire book is organized on unit basis); William M. Alexander and Paul M. Halverson, *Effective Teaching in Secondary Schools*, New York, Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1956, Chapters XIV-XV; Kenneth H. Hansen, *High School Teaching*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957, Chapter VI.

manner in which groups behave in different kinds of environments which involved contrasting types of leadership were carried on at the University of Iowa under the leadership of Kurt Lewin.<sup>39</sup> These studies tend to show that a group in the process of carrying out a project, solving a problem, or engaging in any kind of activity involving common concerns is more effective when democratic principles are utilized in planning and carrying forward the activity.

From the small beginning made at the University of Iowa, the movement has spread rapidly and extensive experimentation has been carried out not only in school situations but also in industry, community projects, professional organizations, and the like.<sup>40</sup>

The nature of the group process is fairly simple, though a very elaborate terminology has grown up in an attempt to define the functions of leaders, observers, recorders, and the like. One school of thought refuses to associate the concept with democracy and confines itself to objective descriptions of group behavior under varying conditions. While this is undoubtedly a valuable emphasis, it tends to obscure some of the principal values which are of importance to educators.

From the standpoint of democratic education the group process has been defined as follows:

*Group process . . . refers to the ends-means procedures utilized by a group of individuals thinking, discussing, planning, deciding, acting and evaluating together for the purpose of attacking and solving a common problem. It implies the meeting and interacting of minds in face-to-face relationships in which co-operative and creative thinking takes place and action and growth ensue (The goal of group processes is group productivity, that is, getting something done which could not be done by a single individual.)*

The real focus of group processes in education is relations with or between people. . . . The process creates and recreates designs which make the most of the collective judgments of the group members. The continuous mobilization of the positive elements which come out of the interaction of

<sup>39</sup> See Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lippitt, and Ralph K. White, "Patterns of Aggressive Behavior in Experimentally Created Social Climates," *Journal of Social Psychology*, X, 271-279 (May, 1939).

<sup>40</sup> For example see Leland Bradford, "Building Employee Security," *Personnel*, New York, American Management Association (January, 1946); J. R. P. French, Jr., "A Method of Training Foremen," in *Human Factors in Management*, Schuler Dean Hoslet, ed., Parkville, Mo., Park College Press, 1946; William V. Biddle, *Community Studies and Dynamics*, Richmond, Ind., Earlham College, 1948.



group members gives the group process its dynamic force and power. Its material are the ideas, feelings, and experiences of people because the group is people. Group processes are simply the ends-means procedures developed by a group unified by interdependency of behavior and by the identification of the members of the group in attacking a common problem.<sup>41</sup>

This rather widely accepted definition of group process is closely related, if not identical, to group thinking, which was discussed briefly in Chapter III. While it must be admitted that reflective thinking is a process that takes place between an *individual* and his environment, it is also true that a group, faced with a common concern, may proceed in much the same manner as an individual. In neither case do the Dewey steps of a complete act of thought take place logically or systematically at all times. Yet it is possible to identify at least three interrelated stages as follows:

1. *The Planning Stage.* The group identifies its problem and formulates procedures for arriving at a solution. In most cases this stage involves several proposals for solution (hypotheses), some of which are accepted for further study.
2. *The Developmental Stage.* The group collects data which have a bearing upon the solution of the problem. Sub-groups work in terms of the decisions made in the planning stage. Interaction among members takes place as they attempt to arrive at the "best" solution of the problem.
3. *The Concluding and Evaluating Stage.* The group pools the efforts of individual members and evaluates the effectiveness of the proposed solution in terms of the goals or purposes which were defined in the initial stages. If a solution proves to be acceptable to the group, and calls for action, rather than the individual acceptance of a point of view, then this stage might well merge with a fourth stage in which decisions are implemented.

<sup>41</sup> *Group Processes in Supervision*, Washington, D.C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1948, pp. 27-28. (Italics in original.) For other interpretations of the nature of group processes, see: Kenneth Benne and Bozidar Muntyan, *Human Relations in Curriculum Change*, New York, The Dryden Press, 1950. For good suggestions for training personnel for group work, see: Mathew B. Miles, *Learning to Work in Groups*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1959. For a very helpful discussion of the use of group processes in training in thinking, see: Burton, Kimball, and Wing, *op. cit.*, pp. 327-332.

It will be noted that the above analysis of how a group goes about solving a problem of common concern is really the essence of *group process* or *group dynamics*. It is also almost identical to the steps involved in developing a unit of work in the classroom. The movement has provided teachers with significant help in defining their own roles in the educative process and in developing effective techniques in group discussion.

Some characteristics of an effective generalized teaching-learning procedure Drawing upon our earlier discussion of democratic values, learning theories, group thinking and processes, and unit teaching, we present the following list of generalizations which are the characteristics of an acceptable general procedure in education.

1. The concept of the complete act of thought provides the key to an effective classroom procedure. This concept involves: perplexity, confusion, or doubt, leading to a definition of the problem; the setting up of one or more hypotheses or tentative plans of action; investigation, analysis, interpretation, testing the various hypotheses with the necessary elaboration, modification, or refinement of the most fruitful hypothesis; and, action based upon adequate data.<sup>42</sup>

2. The complete act of thought describes not only the way an individual goes about resolving a difficulty, but also describes the way a group with a common problem operates in order to find a solution to its problem.

3. An effective teaching procedure recognizes the unity of various learning products, e.g., *ideals, attitudes, understandings, appreciations, skills*, and treats them as integral parts of the learning situation.

4. The ideals of democracy, the dynamic nature of the individual, the basic principles of motivation suggest that an effective teaching procedure gives a large place to *cooperative purposing, planning, working, and evaluating*.

5. An effective teaching procedure should take into account the wide

<sup>42</sup> For a sharp and well-documented dissent from this point of view, see: Herman J. Hermanowicz, "A Critical Look at Problem Solving as Teaching Method," *Educational Leadership*, XVIII, 299-306 (February, 1961). It must be admitted that not all educational experience follows the rigorous pattern of the scientific method, but genuine experience is cognitive and as such calls for reflective thinking if transfer and reconstruction of experience are to take place. There must, of course, be wide latitude in applying this generalization to any given situation. Readers will be interested, in this connection, to examine: H. Gordon Hullfish and Philip G. Smith, *Reflective Thinking, The Method of Education*, New York, Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc., 1961.

range of individual differences which characterizes all groups, however common their purposes may be.

6. An effective teaching procedure should be sufficiently flexible to deal with a wide variety of learning situations.

7. An effective teaching procedure should facilitate the use of a wide variety of resources, such as reference materials, films, and recordings as integral parts of the learning experiences.

8. An effective teaching procedure draws freely upon material from appropriate fields of knowledge.

**The learning unit** If the generalizations presented above are accepted as valid, the time-honored daily-assignment-recitation which continues to be the most widely used procedure in the American high school, must be abandoned. Many of the criticisms of this procedure have been discussed in previous chapters. They need only to be summarized at this point.

The daily recitation procedure (1) is inconsistent with the new psychology of learning, (2) does not provide adequately for individual differences, (3) is destructive of student and teacher initiative, (4) is inadequate for purposes of achieving democratic values, (5) does not lend itself to cooperative teaching, (6) discourages the unifying of subject fields or learning experiences, (7) perpetuates the ground-to-be-covered conception of education, and (8) lends support to the slavish use of the textbook.

As a matter of fact, the procedure has but one thing to recommend it. It provides for a clearly understood and easily administered educational program. Since it has been in use for so long, it has the support of tradition and hence is difficult to change.

The learning unit is the most promising procedure for carrying into effect the best we have learned from our study of the psychology of learning, and the various movements looking toward a general unified conception of educational method. Many of these plans have been described briefly in preceding sections of this chapter. Perhaps it is sufficient to state at this point that such a learning unit involves (1) a broad comprehensive problem or project which is a common concern of the group, (2) a series of related activities so selected and organized as to provide common learnings for the entire group and individual learning

in terms of the specific needs, abilities, and interests of students, and (3) a program of continuous cooperative evaluation of outcomes.

Usually unit teaching involves three stages as follows: (1) the *planning stage* in which problems are clarified, alternate plans of work considered, and decisions reached as to how the group shall proceed; (2) an extended *working stage* in which there is much group discussion, library research, investigations, experimentation, individual and committee work, and the like; and (3) a *culminating stage*, in which results are brought together, conclusions are reached, and results are evaluated.

Why has a plan that has so much to recommend it from the standpoint of educational theory received so little acceptance in practice? The answer is not difficult to discover. The emphasis upon unit teaching as method has not been accompanied by corresponding emphasis upon the unit as a basis for curriculum reorganization. The result is that teachers have attempted, without marked success, to adapt a fixed textbook-ridden curriculum to the unit approach. Succeeding chapters will attempt to provide concrete suggestions for translating the theory of general method into practice.

## SUMMARY

For more than half a century, educators have been trying to develop a concept of general method for organizing group instruction which is consistent with the growing body of knowledge in the areas of learning and human motivation. The movement has been aided by the shift in psychological emphasis from the atomistic to the organismic conception of the nature of the learner and the learning process; by the educational philosophers' attempts to relate learning more closely to democratic values; by continuous classroom experimentation in translating theory into practice; and by the recent emphasis upon the use of democratic group process not only in school but also in many other types of group activity.

Some form of unit teaching, which breaks completely with the daily-ground-to-be-covered conception of education, promises most as a means of translating theory into practice. A large body of successful experience is now available to teachers. The formal, highly mechanized unit plans have given way to an informal approach which recognizes that group learning takes place most effectively when problems are identified by the

group itself and solved by cooperative group action, under the leadership of a teacher who takes seriously the commitment of the school to promote and refine democratic living.

This concept of the nature of general method cannot be grafted to a textbook-oriented curriculum. The attempt to do so has largely resulted in failure. The method of dealing creatively with learners provides the dynamic for curriculum development. When this important interpretation of the nature of method is fully realized, fundamental improvements will be made in high-school programs.

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# 10

## *Teachers and Students at Work: principles and procedures*



ONE OF THE most controversial issues in secondary-school curriculum reorganization centers around the extent to which students should participate in the planning and carrying out of school activities. In the early stages of the development of the progressive movement, as a reaction against extreme imposition and regimentation, some educational theorists advocated programs which gave the student the central responsibility for determining how he should spend his time in school. Acting upon this theory, some schools undoubtedly went too far in interpreting freedom as mere absence of restraint. Often the theory was used by weak teachers as an excuse for their inability to exercise adequate school control. Traditional educators, who were not inclined to relinquish the arbitrary authority which they held, and which they believed was essential to inculcate discipline in students as an indispensable preparation for life, seized upon the weaknesses of the progressive movement, frequently exaggerating them. The clash between these two schools of thought has never been fully reconciled. As a matter of fact the "cold war" intensified the conflict. Let's examine the issue in somewhat more detail.

Schools are charged with softness, lack of discipline and authority. Critics, casting about for an explanation of the alleged supremacy of the Soviet Union in missile development and the conquest of outer space, have returned to the fray with the old charges of lack of discipline, disrespect for authority, and extreme permissiveness. In addition to being blamed for our shortcomings in technological development, the



school is now charged with responsibility for the increase in juvenile delinquency. Perhaps a few typical statements will make this clear:

But this idea of making education a sort of easy-to-take entertainment leaves the pupil with something less than habits of thought. In the very old-fashioned schools I attended, we were forced to take two subjects every semester that you did *not* like and had little aptitude for. That's how some habits of self-discipline were taught. You had to learn the darned stuff. Sometimes you learned to appreciate it, even like it enough to go on. You discovered that you could buckle down and learn—if you had to.

Learning to face life with some sort of easy-going courses may pass the school day entertainingly but what is learned?

Going light on the homework (we used to have about two hours a night for studying at home—or else!) may give the young people a marvelous week for looking at TV, listening to the radio, going out . . . but what have they learned? . . . Perhaps I'm talking an old-fashioned discipline that shouldn't exist in these days of freedom and progress and leave-me-alone.<sup>1</sup>

In an attempt to place some of the responsibility for juvenile delinquency on the schools John T. Flynn says, in part:

Some 20 years ago a group of so-called "progressive" educators took over the system of public instruction in many areas around the country.

*Under the baleful system of progressive or "modern" education, discipline was banished.*

Learning is something which can be acquired without effort, hence discipline is unnecessary. The little darlings must be permitted to indulge their inner faculties for self-expression.

Prescribed courses are no longer fixed. The youngsters must make their own choices. . . . The system ignores completely one great function of the individual to which he must be introduced at an early age.

That is the thing called discipline—*not ruthless and angry punishment—but a method of learning through which the student becomes gradually aware of a sense of personal and social responsibility.*<sup>2</sup> (Italics in original.)

<sup>1</sup> From George Grim in the *Minneapolis Tribune*, March 14, 1950. This article is a part of the campaign waged in Minneapolis against the so-called "Common Learnings" program.

<sup>2</sup> From a syndicated column appearing in the *Ohio State Journal*, September 24, 1958. That this criticism is not novel is attested by a quotation from Socrates reported by Paul Bixby. "Children now love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority. They show disrespect for elders, and love chatter in place of exercise. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company and tyrannize over their teachers." And an editorial in the *New York Sun*, October 5, 1902, declared: "When we were . . . boys, boys had to do a little work in school. They were not coaxed; they were ham-

One of the more exuberant and vehement critics<sup>3</sup> places some of the responsibility upon the school for what he calls "slobbism"—a term which he uses to describe the extremely hostile delinquent. He concedes that "the great majority of our high-school pupils is 'as yet' free from the grosser manifestations of slobbism" and concedes that the causes of juvenile delinquency are complex, but he believes that education cannot be "absolved of all responsibility for the golems who stalk its halls." He demands to know who is to blame, and then speculates as follows:

Could it possibly stem from the kaleidoscopic and chaotic mishmash of canal building, Hopi Indians, tomato growing, air transport, and steel puddling through which we have merry-go-rounded our pupils in recent years? Is it possible that we have produced a group unamenable to discipline simply because we never insisted upon their mastery of anything that required discipline to overcome?

It is barely conceivable that, by destroying the hierarchy of values which places mastery of specific subject matter in a position of paramount importance, we have persuaded their already confused minds that nothing in life, including life itself, is of any particular importance. We have required them to go to school but we have not required them to do any work. Instead, we have created special "courses" wherein they might sprawl and leer in company with one another, and where constructive learning is laughed out of court.<sup>4</sup>

Another critic<sup>5</sup> blames the alarming increase in juvenile delinquency partly upon our educational system that has followed "the wisdom of John Dewey blindly." He asserts:

We have had success in taming the great majority of our adolescents, not by the mistaken methods of totalitarian regimentation, but by an equally inept method of depriving them of any sense of true authority, of being guided and being challenged to new ideas and visions; we have left

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mered. . . . In these more fortunate times . . . education has become in many places a sort of vaudeville show. The child must be kept amused and learns what he *pleases*." (Italics in original.)

<sup>3</sup> Max Rafferty, "The Cult of the Slob," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XL, 56-59 (November, 1958).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59. For a constructive solution to the problem raised by Rafferty, see Robert J. Havighurst, "What to Do About the Tough, Hostile Boy," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XL, 136-137 (December, 1958).

<sup>5</sup> Walter Leibrcht, "The Challenge of Juvenile Delinquency: A Sickness in Society," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XXXIX, 162-167 (January, 1958).

them almost completely to themselves in an atmosphere of unmanageable and meaningless freedom.<sup>6</sup>

He contends that the basic cause of juvenile delinquency is a "sickness of society" which is characterized by the surrender of high moral and spiritual standards in favor of "an unabashed glorification of success—defined in narrow arbitrary terms." As a result of this lack of proper socioeconomic orientation, our schools have contributed to the problem. He asserts:

Our high school students simply do not know what hard and disciplined intellectual work is, and vast numbers of students develop the habit of getting by with the least effort. . . . We have provided our children with a soft bed, but we have robbed them of responsibility and the need to work hard—a general neglect which is having effect upon our whole society, which at the present moment finds itself embarrassingly behind the Soviet Union in certain respects, with regard to actual achievements in the educational process. The high school period becomes for many a time of waiting, most trying both for the bright students who become bored and for the poorly gifted students who are carried along without fully participating in the activities of the class.<sup>7</sup>

The high school responds The response to the barrage of criticisms, of which those cited above are a small sample indeed, has been almost immediate. In order to improve quality<sup>8</sup> many schools have instituted more rigorous testing programs—especially for students who intend to go to college, and the colleges have added a multiplicity of tests to their entrance programs. Marking systems have been changed to stimulate more rigorous standards of mastery. Teachers, goaded on by administrators, have assigned more homework to students—especially for college-bound students. The so-called college panic has undoubtedly resulted in greater regimentation and less emphasis upon what the critics call fads and frills. These trends have been discussed in earlier chapters and are mentioned here only to indicate their impact upon the problem of promoting democratic living in the school and classroom.

How can we preserve and extend the gains which have been made

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 164.

<sup>8</sup> For an interesting attempt to evaluate the programs of a wide variety of school situations, see *Quest for Quality*, a series of 14 booklets, Evanston, Ill., National School Boards Association; Washington, D.C., American Association of School Administrators, 1960.

during the past half-century in discovering effective ways of providing continuous experiences for youth in democratic participation in the school-community? In this chapter, the authors attempt to set forth the conditions under which this may be done. Our discussion is organized around three major generalizations as follows: (1) Effective student participation in the high school is contingent upon the creation of a democratic climate for learning and an understanding of group processes in the classroom; (2) Dealing with controversial issues in the classroom is one of the imperatives of a democratic school system and is an effective means of improving the quality of student participation in the school program; and, (3) A sound program of guidance is organically related to the curriculum and to democratic student participation in the classroom.

We shall discuss each of these generalizations in turn, setting forth the principles and procedures underlying them, and propose practices which give promise of being effective in improving programs of student participation.

#### **EFFECTIVE STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL IS CONTINGENT ON THE CREATION OF A DEMOCRATIC CLIMATE FOR LEARNING AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF GROUP PROCESSES IN THE CLASSROOM**

One might be disposed to withdraw from the struggle to maintain and extend democratic education and join the chorus of approval of the various schemes for promoting "excellence" were it not for our commitment to democratic values. Because some of the early so-called progressive schools went to excesses in giving students freedom instead of insisting that they earn it, is not sufficient reason for abandoning our commitment. In our zeal to enforce an externally imposed discipline and unquestioned obedience and respect for authority, we may destroy democracy. If young people are to play their part in the preservation of our freedoms, they must be taught that authorities are to be evaluated and that only those that promise most for improving the quality of democratic living are to be trusted and followed. How else are students to learn to distinguish between the statesman and the demagogue, between truth and propaganda?

The school sensitive to its democratic commitment, therefore, seeks to develop the ability to examine authorities critically and to give allegi-



*Courtesy, Roosevelt High School*

Under the impetus of providing for highly gifted students, many high schools are establishing "honors" programs. Such programs stress individualized instruction and creativeness.

A group of sophomores in an English Honors course in Roosevelt High School in Honolulu, Hawaii. The students are doing a critique of an original play the class is writing. The program for the gifted is financed by legislative allotments.

ance to policies and programs which further the social goals of our society. Students must, therefore, have a voice in planning and carrying into effect the activities which make up the school program. In this manner they learn through the actual processes of living that certain ways of behaving defeat the realization of the goals which they helped to establish, and that other ways of behaving promote the attainment of these goals. This is discipline of the most rigorous kind, but it is the only kind which is consistent with the larger values to which we as a people give allegiance. To the uncritical observer, a given school situation in which this kind of behavior is being developed may look like license or anarchy, but

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once it is seen that such behavior is being *directed by the teacher* to the development of individuals who assume responsibility for their conduct, the situation takes on a totally different meaning. Student participation is not a surrender of the teacher to the whims of the student. It is a genuine attempt to teach the values of democracy by living them in the classroom, the shops, the studios, and on the playing fields. Externally imposed discipline gives way to increasing power on the part of students to assume responsibility for their own conduct.

The critics seem to make a virtue out of work that is especially hard and distasteful. Forcing the student to perform inherently disagreeable tasks is supposed to train him for the rigors of life outside the school. Furthermore, such tasks are supposed somehow to "train the mind." What the critics fail to recognize is that much has been discovered in recent years concerning the nature of learning and the conditions under which it takes place most effectively. It is now a commonly recognized principle that learning is most effective when the task is accepted by the learner as being worthwhile and when its accomplishment is accompanied by a feeling of genuine achievement.<sup>9</sup> In other words, students work hard at tasks which have significance in their lives. The modern school, therefore, organizes its program in terms of the problems and functions of present-day living, instead of in terms of the dead past. Thus the life of the immediate and wider community, the problems of growing up in a rapidly changing culture, the critical issues that confront the world today become the vital points for enlisting the allegiance of young people. And when such allegiance is secured, the "discipline of hard work" takes on new meanings. Habits of persistence, self-discipline, and social responsibility grow directly out of life as it is being lived.

Good schools everywhere are struggling to relate their programs to the realities of living in a complex and confused world. The critics are obligated to use their criticism to further the task, rather than to destroy the gains which have been made.

The meaning of democracy The proper approach then to the problem of student participation in the life of the school is through the interpretation of the true meaning of democracy. While people are bound to disagree upon the details, there is probably general agreement upon the

<sup>9</sup> See Chapter III.

following propositions which have been stated previously in this volume and elsewhere.

1. Democracy is a form of social organization which holds that the optimal development of the individual—of all individuals, represents the highest good.

2. Man achieves optimal development only through acting in concert with his fellows, each individual sensitive to the effects of his acts upon others.

3. The optimal development of all can be realized only to the extent that men have faith in intelligence as a method of solving individual and group problems.

4. The ideal of optimal development requires that all individuals who have a stake in a given enterprise participate in planning and carrying it into effect.<sup>10</sup>

The translation of these principles into ways of living in the school is the major task of education today. Unless young people have wide opportunities to experience democracy in their daily living, there is little chance that they will become staunch defenders of their freedoms. "Stiffening up" requirements, increasing the pressures of objective examinations and externally imposed testing programs, eliminating of "soft" and so-called practical courses, and imposing more homework may only aggravate the problem that such measures are intended to solve.

**Some principles of democratic group process** The concept of group process, discussed briefly in the previous chapter, provides help in defining the roles of teachers and students in carrying out in practice the principles of democratic living stated above. In another connection, some of the more important of these have been stated by one of the authors as follows:

1. The group process is effective to the extent that concerns are shared by members of the group.

2. The group process is most effective in situations in which the leadership is shared by various members of the group.

3. The solution of a problem arrived at through the group process is to be accepted as the "best" solution, even though the judgment of the group is not shared by the status leader.

<sup>10</sup> Harold Benjamin, ed., *Democracy in the Administration of Higher Education*, Chapter V, "Some Principles of Democratic Association" by Harold Alberty, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1950, pp. 63-64.

4. The group process requires that there be mutual respect for members of the group and that differences among individuals or minorities be utilized as a means of developing richer and deeper insights which will enhance the quality of the solution of the problem.

5. The effective use of the group process is one means of releasing the creative potentialities of the members of an organization.

6. The status leader facilitates the process by means of which decisions on common problems are reached.<sup>11</sup>

**Obstacles to applying democratic group process** Teachers are vested by law with complete control and leadership in the classroom. This role is supported not only by law but also by tradition and custom.<sup>12</sup> To many people it is unthinkable that some of the power legally vested in the teacher be delegated to students. Certainly the whole idea is distasteful to many of the critics, and many teachers consider such delegation of authority as a threat to their security. That it need not be so is amply demonstrated by current practice.

In most schools the curriculum is set up in advance through narrow courses of study or adopted text and workbooks which prescribe the ground to be covered, sometimes in the form of daily lessons. In these cases, democratic participation is out of the question. The important decisions have been made long before the student arrives upon the scene. Among these may well be the determination of the tests and examinations which measure the ground to be covered. The use of programmed learning and teaching machines may also contribute to the lack of opportunity for participation. In the extracurricular field the situation is different. Here the students exercise considerable control over their clubs and organizations. Democratic living has ample opportunity to function, in some cases with too little participation by teachers. These activities are correctly regarded as curricular, but the very fact that sharp differences in the extent of cooperative action exist between the classroom and the "activities period" indicates the lack of a consistent program in which the student sees the entire life of the school as a unity, as an opportunity for democratic participation.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 63-74, *passim*.

<sup>12</sup> For an excellent discussion of this point, see: Jacob W. Getzels and Herbert A. Thelen, "The Classroom Group as a Unique Social System," in *The Dynamics of Instructional Groups*. Fifty-ninth Yearbook, Part II, National Society for the Study of Education, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1960, pp. 53-82.



A third obstacle is the student in the conventional school. He sees his role as one of obedience to the mandates of the teacher. He wants to be told what to do and when and how to do it. He, like the teacher, may feel a loss of security when he is asked to assume leadership in activities which are thought to be exclusively within the domain of the teacher.

Extending the opportunities for student participation Any successful attempt to extend the program of student participation depends, of course, upon the attitude of the school. It needs to re-examine the values which it holds to be significant in education. If it regards the acquisition of subject matter as of supreme importance, then cooperative planning is justified on the ground that if the student participates to some extent in the determination of activities and procedures, he will be happier and learn more subject matter. Thus, cooperative planning becomes a device to carry out purposes that are usually external to the student's life. This, however, is a step in the right direction. If, on the other hand, the school is thoroughly committed to the thesis that the most important values in education are intimately associated with the ability and zeal to work together for the common good, and that the best way to prepare for democratic citizenship is through practicing it in the day-to-day life of the school, then the way lies open to a genuine extension of the opportunities for cooperative teacher-student planning. But such a decision is not easy to make because it involves the subordination of the learning of fixed quotas of subject matter to learning the techniques of democratic action by practicing them. Furthermore, schools that are bold enough to try new ways of involving students in democratic situations are likely to run head on into the charge of the critics that we must promote "toughness" if we are to compete with our tough enemies.

Some principles involved in working democratically with students The authors believe that many schools would welcome more genuine participation by students if the "climate" were such as to encourage it and if they were more certain that the program would not further the laxness of which the critics complain. To this end we propose some guiding principles involved in working democratically with students in the classroom.

1. *Student participation in planning and carrying out learning activities is likely to be more successful in a school which has a vital program of administrator-teacher determination of school policy. Co-operative curriculum planning among teachers and students does not*

flourish in an atmosphere of autocracy. Where teachers have no voice in the determination of school policy, the formulation of school purposes, or the conditions under which they work, there is little likelihood that democracy in the classroom will be extensively practiced. In the first place, a school administrator who exercises autocratic controls would frown upon any widespread attempt on the part of the teachers to extend democracy to students, for this would be a glaring inconsistency which would soon threaten existing administrative policy. In the second place, such administration is usually accompanied by a rigid curriculum organization which leaves few decisions to be made by teachers and students. In the third place, teachers who are forced to live in an autocratic atmosphere are loath to jeopardize their security by introducing democratic practices into the classroom.<sup>12</sup>

But not every administrator is of the stern autocratic type that brooks no interference with his policies. He may still be autocratic, but as Mitchum<sup>13</sup> points out, he may also be benevolent. "He may traffic with a degree of democratic machinery, proclaim a faith in democracy, but nonetheless direct and control everything personally."<sup>13</sup> The first type, in our judgment, is to be preferred because teachers know where he stands and govern themselves accordingly. The benevolent despot, on the other hand, may lead school personnel to work hard in developing curriculum materials only to find that they have been "filed" because they are not approved by the administration. Perhaps even worse is the laissez-faire administrator. "He is not inclined to disturb matters that do not disturb him. If a problem is not screaming for attention, perhaps it doesn't exist. If an issue can be postponed, perhaps it will go away."<sup>14</sup> He probably claims to be democratic, but it is merely a front which he uses so that he will not have to take a stand, but as Halpin points out, "teachers can quickly spot the phony who tries to hide his own ineptness in the soggy oatmeal of a pseudo group process."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> For a helpful analysis of the role of the administrator, see: *Professional Administrators for America's Schools*. Thirty-eighth Yearbook, American Association of School Administrators, Washington, National Education Association, 1960.

<sup>13</sup> Paul M. Mitchum, *The High School Principal and Staff Plan for Curriculum Improvement*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958, Chapter I.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>16</sup> Andrew W. Halpin, "The Superintendent's Effectiveness as a Leader," *Administrator's Notebook*, VII, 1-4 (October, 1958).

The fourth type of administrator has faith in the democratic process. He uses his position to organize life within his school so that all personnel, even custodians, carry out their related functions cooperatively and perform their specific duties with a sense that they are contributing to the well-being of the entire group. Mitchum lists the following "requirements" of a democratic principal as follows:

1. The principal and the staff understand each other.
2. The principal respects staff members' viewpoints.
3. The principal stimulates professional growth.
4. The principal accepts responsibility for program improvement.
5. The principal shares leadership.
6. The principal works as a member of a leadership team.
7. The principal secures cooperation of parents in program changes.
8. The principal is committed to the democratic concept of administration.<sup>15</sup>

It is easy to see how democratic teacher-student relationships might flourish in a school in which administrators conceive their functions in terms of the qualifications stated above.

An interesting example of a climate that fosters democratic teacher-student relationships is reported by Caswell and associates:

Glencoe (Ill.) has a democratic organization which is designed to bring out the best in every individual associated with us, not by administrative order, but through self-realization.

We have three schools, located in the north, center, and south sections of the town. Our total school population is about 900, and we have about fifty-five teachers to guide their education. Since we are a small organization, informality is easy. One of the first impressions visitors receive as they observe our teachers is our warm friendly relationship. We call each other by first names, as any close friends do. This is an honest expression of the basic fact that we enjoy each other. Rank and title in themselves merit no respect with us. Our respect goes deeper. It is measured in terms of what we do, not what we are called. Thus, when the superintendent is greeted, "Hi, Paul," it is an honest expression of close personal regard, and not an artificial demonstration. . . .

<sup>15</sup> Mitchum, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9. For a strikingly similar analysis of conceptions of administration written many years ago, see Harold Albery and Vivian T. Thayer, *Supervision in the Secondary School*, Boston, D. C. Heath and Company, 1931, p. 18. These authors identify: (1) the Let-Alone or Leisure Time Conception, (2) the Autocratic Conception, (3) the Objective and Scientific Conception, and (4) the Democratic Conception.

The mechanical organization of the staff is as described in the following paragraph.

The *general faculty* unit consists of the total teaching and administrative staff. This group elects its chairman annually and meets regularly—at least once each month—to carry on group discussions of all matters pertaining to the school and to take group action in these matters. In this way all school matters, curricular and otherwise are given full consideration in an open meeting where everyone can say what he feels. Thus nothing takes place without the full knowledge and consent of the total staff. General faculty meetings are never occasions for the administration to announce decisions on which the staff has had no opportunity to act. We do everything cooperatively. What this means in staff understanding and support must be self-evident.<sup>19</sup>

It is not surprising that a democratically conceived policy-making program such as has been described would carry over into the classroom. This phase of the program is described as follows:

Our classrooms contain groups of children living together in normal human relationships. There is freedom but no license. Individuals are respected but they also show respect. There is democratic planning and group agreement. Teaching is individualized. We use no textbooks; instead, we have many books on every level of ability. There are no arbitrary "grade" standards which pull accelerated students down to mediocrity and pull slow students up toward goals impossible of attainment. We take each child where he is and help him to grow from there. The whole group might be learning about electricity but some children will be reading primary books on the subject while others will be using advanced encyclopedic material on the same topic. We believe in individual differences and strive to help each child progress as fast and as far as he can go. Neither the slow nor the gifted pupil should be held to a mythical "grade level," but each should go to the maximum of his own level.<sup>20</sup>

While democratic school policy-making facilitates planning by individual teachers and students, it would be a mistake to assume that the individual teacher can do nothing apart from an organized group program, for the resourceful teacher will always find ways of rising about the general level. There is no denying the fact, however, that he will be

<sup>19</sup> Hollis L. Caswell and Associates, *Curriculum Improvement in Public School Systems*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1950, pp. 173-174.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187.

confronted by grave difficulties and serious limitations unless he has the support of the administration.

2. *Student participation is more successful in a school in which the entire school staff is committed to the same general philosophy and practices in the classroom.* This principle is a logical extension of the one stated above, which held that student participation flourishes in an atmosphere of democratic organization and administration. At this point will be emphasized the value of a common program of democratic action. Rather extended observation of school practices indicates that the greatest strides in cooperative planning have been made by teachers in core programs. One reason for this is the fact that curricular materials for such courses, fortunately, have not been standardized and organized logically. The result has been that student participation has been greatly encouraged in such courses, partly because of sheer necessity and partly because such courses have been taught by teachers who are interested in improving their classroom procedures. Frequently, and this was particularly true of some of the *Eight-Year Study* schools, much emphasis is placed upon reorganization in the core area, leaving the elective courses, which for the most part are composed of organized subjects, somewhat out of the picture. Thus, we might find a situation in which the cooperative planning of units of work was the regular practice in the core, and teacher-made assignments, often on the daily basis, were customary in the other aspects of the curriculum. It is easy to see how this resulted in much confusion on the part of the student. For example, he would spend the first two periods of the day in the core class in which the group might devote the entire time in organizing itself into committees to explore various aspects of housing, or even in deciding what aspects of housing should be studied. At the close of this period, he would go to his science class in which he followed the directions in the laboratory manual for verifying Archimedes' principle which he had already learned during the preceding class period. Naturally he would wonder about the difference and would attempt to evaluate the contrasting procedures in terms of the values that he held at the time. No one would object to such an evaluation provided there existed good reasons for marked differences, but if such differences are merely the result of a failure of the school to operate in terms of a common philosophy, conclusions reached by the student are apt to be based upon false premises.

Are there fundamental and inherent differences in the various sub-

jects or areas, which call for rigid procedures in some and flexible procedures in others? The differences are more likely to be found in the attitude of the teacher than in the nature of the area. Student participation in planning and carrying out classroom activities can play a significant role in every aspect of the curriculum, provided teachers are sensitive to the values which are possible of realization. Obviously, these values will be realized more effectively if all members of the teaching staff work together.

3. *Student participation in classroom planning is not a substitute for curriculum pre-planning on the part of the school and the teacher.* Unfortunately, in the early days of the progressive movement, some teachers interpreted the philosophy underlying democratic participation to mean that students should determine the activities which they wished to pursue without much, if any, guidance from the teacher. Other teachers became so zealous in promoting teacher-student planning that they tended to forget the setting in which it took place and the part which they played in the planning process. When they wrote of their experiences, one often gained the impression, perhaps erroneously, that the student made all the decisions without the help of the teacher.

If we face the problem realistically, we must recognize, first of all, that the ideals, values, and purposes of the school are defined by the school's responsibility for promoting and refining democratic living. They are not a matter of whim or caprice. All that the school does must further these purposes if it is to continue to retain the support of society. Second, it must be recognized that needs are not always recognized by students, and third, that the school owes an obligation to students to see to it that they grow optimally in all the aspects of living, in terms of their own potentialities. All this means that the school must have overall purposes to which all members of the teaching staff hold allegiance, and that some general curriculum structure that will guarantee the development of the democratic personality must be developed and accepted by all. Problem areas or broad comprehensive units which give promise of providing richness of experience in personal and community living may be set up without violating the creative process.

Schools vary, of course, in the extent to which they will pre-plan broad curricular areas, but most educators will agree that this pre-planning is essential and that it must not be left to "the inspiration of the moment." Students are quick to recognize the necessity for such pre-

planning, and they accept it is a necessary aspect of their education. It is within this framework that democratic teacher-student activities take root and develop. For example, the school may decide that students at a certain level require experiences related to the life of the community. The scope and precise nature of these experiences may well be left to teacher-student decision.<sup>21</sup>

4. *The values of student participation need to be well understood and accepted by parents and the general public.* Most parents received their education in rather formal situations. They are accustomed to thinking of education as so much ground to be covered in the form of daily assignments from textbooks. Many of them have had no opportunity to reorient themselves in terms of the school's function to provide training in democratic citizenship. Consequently, they are apt to think of the time spent by the teacher and students in initiating a unit of work as wasted. In the school *they* attended, the textbooks were on hand the first day of school and the teachers made their assignments. Study and recitation began immediately. In their present lives they spend much time in defining and clarifying their problems and in planning their solution, but they tend not to identify this process with what is done in school. In other words, there is a wide gap between school and life that cannot be bridged without help.

This calls for a good public relations program which utilizes all possible media of communication to keep the public informed about the school program. Parents want their children to become self-reliant, socially sensitive, thinking individuals, and they can readily be made to comprehend that direct experience in the practice of these values is much more valuable than the acquisition of knowledge about them.

5. *Democratic student-teacher relationships are more likely to prevail in a high school that encourages community participation in determining policies and program development.* It is not enough, however important it may be, to inform the community about the school's program. Too long have we based our public relations program on "selling the schools." The enormously increased enrollments with the resulting need for increased housing and equipment, the steadily mounting tax rate,

<sup>21</sup> Not all authorities in the curriculum field subscribe to this point of view. For example, see: Roland C. Faunce and Nelson L. Bossing, *Developing the Core Curriculum*, Second edition, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1958; Rosaline M. Zapf, *Democratic Processes in the Classroom*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959.

and the anxiety on the part of the public brought about by the fear of Soviet supremacy has led to an extension of the area of lay participation in all areas of school life, particularly those related to the curriculum.<sup>22</sup>

It would be difficult to show a causal relationship between citizen participation and improved teacher-student relationships, but it seems a fair assumption that such participation, if entered into in a truly democratic spirit, would eventually contribute to a more democratic climate in the classroom.

Fortunately, a very recent study of school-evaluation practices has yielded many illustrations of good community participation. This study was instituted by the National School Boards Association and the American Association of School Administrators and financed by a grant from the Fund for the Advancement of Education. Lewis E. Harris, Executive Secretary of the Ohio School Boards Association, was director of the project.

At the outset, 100 carefully selected school systems were invited to submit illustrations of their approaches to all school evaluation. A screening committee made up of administrators and curriculum specialists then selected 28 school districts representing differing kinds of districts, differing administrative organizations, and differing geographical areas for case studies. Competent observers spent a week or more in each district to secure first-hand information concerning practices. Written reports were prepared by the investigating teams and, after a final editing by the director of the project, were published.<sup>23</sup>

Some form of citizen participation was in effect in practically all of the 28 school systems studied. In some cases this participation was quite informal. In others well-developed permanent organizations were instituted.

Since this comprehensive study provides information concerning actual lay participation in public schools, it seems worthwhile to quote some of the practices found in these school districts. The first report is from "Jupiter" city schools located in the center of a rich agricultural area:

<sup>22</sup> For many illustrations of lay participation in curriculum development, see. Harold J. McNally and A. Harry Passow and Associates, *Improving the Quality of Public School Programs*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1960, Roald Campbell and John A. Ramseyer, *The Dynamics of School-Community Relationships*, New York, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1955, David B. Dreiman, *How To Get Better Schools*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1956.

<sup>23</sup> *Quest for Quality*, op. cit.



Jupiter schools also utilize laymen to help solve school problems. Citizen consultants often are invited to advise the Board of Education on specific problems. For instance, in a recent enrollment study and the selection of a new high school site, the board consulted several individuals from the community and college faculty.

Citizen participation has also been felt in the establishment of new curriculum guides. Lay involvement has usually come through appointment of representatives from the various Jupiter service and civic clubs. However, appointments have been made from committees comprised of PTA representatives, principals and Board members. At another time, citizens were chosen at random by a teachers' committee working on curriculum. In this case selection was based on background and ability in a specific curriculum area.

The value of lay participation in curriculum has been particularly apparent in the development of philosophy. For example, in an analysis of the junior high school program, lay citizens helped to review the curriculum and recommended a stronger emphasis on reading and science in the seventh through the ninth grades.

There are also citizens advisory groups for the various cooperative business and vocational programs. . . .<sup>24</sup>

The second report is from the "Centarus" County School District in a typical western state. It has a somewhat more formal organization for citizen participation:

One community in Centarus County has a coordinating council composed of representatives of all social, civic, fraternal and similar groups. The council is provided by the school system with a part-time secretary, necessary clerical help, duplicating and mailing facilities.

Before major changes are instituted in the school, they are taken before the Coordinating Council for reaction in the belief that this will serve as a guide to broadened community opinion.

A continuing effort is made to get civic organizations in Centarus County to concern themselves with the schools. Whenever an important project is being planned, organizations are requested to appoint representatives to participate in the consideration of the project.

The local unit of the League of Women Voters has made a factual study of the schools in one community. This is not designed as a critical appraisal of the schools, but rather as an attempt to provide information for citizens about the schools.

People who do not agree with the present educational practices in Centarus County are not ignored. In fact special efforts are made to try to

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, Booklet No. 13 (Four College City Districts), pp. 20-21.

involve people holding dissenting views about the school program in meetings and on committees. The board and superintendent believe it is more practical to get controversial views aired openly in a positive atmosphere than to pretend that they do not exist.<sup>23</sup>

The third and final report which we shall include is from the "Juno" City Schools in a center for small industry and a marketing and distribution center for a large industrial area. It will be apparent that the citizen participation program, carried on through the Parent-Teachers Association, is the most ambitious one we have presented. The following is a verbatim excerpt from the report:

Probably the one agency which contributes most to the Juno system's flow of knowledge about the community is the Central Council of Parent-Teachers Associations. Through this organization the school system has constant liason with almost every school patron.

Annually since 1952 the Central Council has sponsored a series of study groups in each school during the summer months. Parents and teachers meet daily for one or two weeks to study and to evaluate some phase of the educational program. The study groups have ranged over homework, emotionally disturbed children, and child growth and development.

Early in 1959 the Central Council, at the request of the board of education, set up a program to evaluate the school curriculum. In the fall, 115 study groups, with approximately 5,500 persons attending, evaluated the entire school program. Following the meetings, a detailed questionnaire was sent to about 12,000 families. The questionnaire requested a rating of the various offerings in the secondary school program on a three-point scale of "important," "less important," and "not important." Opinion was also asked about how good a job the Juno schools were doing. About 83 per cent of the questionnaires were returned. The responses, though generally favorable, provided the basis for seven recommendations concerning curriculum which the Central Council made to the school board.

The recommendations included:

- "(1) That more emphasis be placed on reading, penmanship, and spelling in the elementary grades. . . .
- "(2) That some foreign language be offered in elementary grades.
- "(3) That the schedule for teaching band, choir, and orchestra in the elementary grades be worked out so as not to disrupt an entire class for the benefit of a few students.
- "(4) That a course in how to study be given at various levels.
- "(5) That more composition and theme work be required in secondary schools preparatory to college entrance.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, Booklet No. 11 (Two County Unit Districts), pp. 15-16.

- "(6) The emphasis on guidance in secondary schools is recognized and appreciated and we strongly urge its continuance.
- "(7) Many patrons commented on the splendid quality of our teachers. There were, however, almost an equal number commenting on the poor quality of our teachers. We recommend a system of evaluating teachers on their effective teaching ability and not on their educational qualifications alone."<sup>26</sup>

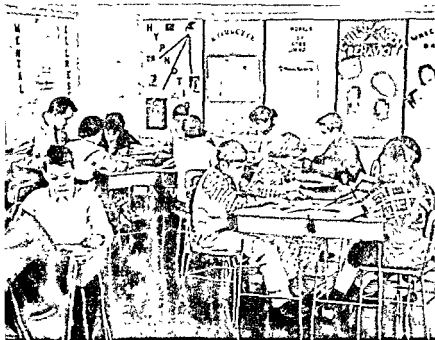
The reader will note that the reports quoted contain no evidence that would point to a direct concern for democratic student relationships, but they do indicate that laymen, if given the opportunity, will participate in policy and program development. Such participation implies a sensitivity on the part of administrators and boards of education to the principle of democratic sharing in solving problems of common concern. It is logical to assume that the recognition of this value would have implications for democratic classroom organization.<sup>27</sup>

6. *Student participation is more successful in a school that is committed to meeting the needs of students, solving their problems, and extending and enriching their interests.* This principle needs little discussion at this point for it has been stressed earlier that in order to have vital student participation in planning, developing, and evaluating classroom activities, there must be something about which decisions have to be made. Regimentation in terms of daily quotas of subject matter to be learned leaves little or nothing to decide. It is a truism to say that human beings think as they are confronted with problematic situations which call for novel adjustments. At other times, they act in routine ways which call for little or no change in behavior. It follows, then, that student participation assumes real meaning in a group only when decisions have to be made in order to achieve ends that are understood and accepted. There is no question about the need for planning when a boy undertakes to build a radio, or when a group proposes to investigate the recreational facilities of the community. The need is not so apparent when the group is expected to cover the "next" chapter of the textbook.

7. *Successful student participation involves the continuous use of the method of group thinking and an ever-increasing appreciation of*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, Booklet No. 5 (Two-Medium-Sized Industrial City Districts), pp. 13-14.

<sup>27</sup> The practices of the 28 schools included in this study are probably not typical of schools in general. For evidence on this point, see: Richard F. Carter, "Voters and Their Schools," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLII, 244-249 (March, 1961).



Courtesy, Amherst Central Junior High School Photo by Neil Stallman

Student participation in planning, executing, and judging classroom activities is an effective means of learning democracy by living it.

A seventh grade "Unified Studies" class in Amherst Central Junior High School, Snyder, N. Y., is working on a broad unit involving family relations. Note that the seating is arranged to facilitate small group work on particular phases of the unit.

*the role of intelligence in solving human problems.* Democracy involves the making of individual and group decisions based on the method of intelligence as opposed to the blind acceptance of conclusions imposed by others. This process involves the solution of problems by formulating hypotheses, examining all available data, reaching conclusions upon the basis of the data, and acting upon the decisions that are reached. It is only when this same method is applied to the life of the school that student participation is successful.

In cases where the problem involves the selection and planning of units of work, the teacher and students working together will set up criteria or guiding principles for selecting such units. These, of course, will

be within the framework or structure of the curriculum. The following is an illustration of cooperatively determined "criteria for selecting a topic":

1. It should be one that will be of value to us now and/or later. This means:
  - a. It should help us to understand the world in which we live
  - or b. It should help us to understand ourselves
  - or c. It should help us to understand adult life and its problems.
  - or d. It should help us to understand the connection between life in the past, our present life, and life in the future.
2. It should be something we really want to know about.
3. It should be something we haven't studied before or which we want to know more about.
4. It should be broad enough so that many may work upon it, but not so broad that it cannot be completed.
5. It should be one for which materials are available.
6. It should be one that will help us achieve our goals.<sup>28</sup>

But the selection of a unit is only the beginning of democratic teacher-student relationships. The following steps, more or less typical of schools utilizing democratic processes, were reported by The Ohio State University School in the *Eight-Year Study*.

1. Preliminary survey of pupils' background and needs.
2. Setting up of criteria for choice of a worthwhile group experience.
3. Examination of a range of worthwhile group experiences in the light of the criteria set up.
4. Cooperative choice of the best possible experience, with teacher responsibility for so directing the activity as to determine whether the choice fits into the needs of the pupil and the culture.
5. Caring for the rights of the minority.
6. Actual division of labor and working out of experience.
7. Revision of the group's working plans as needs dictate.
8. Evaluation of the group's work upon completion of the group experience or unit.
9. Transitions into other units by a technique similar to that mentioned above.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Zapf, *op. cit.*, p. 165. Readers will do well to read the entire chapter, pp. 161-197, from which this extract is quoted.

<sup>29</sup> *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1943, pp. 739-740.

It is evident from the above quotations that the process of cooperative participation is a continuous one which extends from the beginning of the unit to the close. It will be noted also that the process involves the use of group thinking and the method of intelligence at all stages.

But it is not enough that students have continuous practice in the use of the method of intelligence in working with their fellows on common problems. In addition, they must come to see that what they are doing is the essence of democratic living as it is carried on outside of the school. This means that the process must be intellectualized by periodic reference to the way the procedures carried on in the classroom are practiced in solution of problems of community and national life.

8. *Successful student participation begins at the level at which the group is capable of working, and is extended only as the group achieves new insights and increased competence in thinking and working together.* Living democratically is not a gift that is bestowed upon people, but rather is won by continuous struggle, by making and correcting mistakes, by the continuous re-examination and revision of procedures. In short, it is won by increasing capacity to utilize the method of intelligence and increasing reliance upon that method of solving problems of common concern. In this way, the American people have gradually broadened the narrow concept of political democracy to include social and economic democracy. A people that has had no training in the functioning of democracy cannot be expected to change their modes of behavior suddenly. Similarly, a school that has exercised arbitrary controls cannot suddenly shift to complete reliance upon democratic processes, either in administrative policy-making or in classroom curricular decision-making.

In the beginning, then, the teacher must make some estimate of the ability of the group to think and work cooperatively, in terms of background, attitudes, and maturity level. If the students have found security, as many of them do, in definite assignments of work to be done, at first they will not take kindly to a program of cooperative planning if it involves too much uncertainty as to procedures and too much responsibility for the determination of outcomes. Students who are not aware of the purposes of student participation—the development of democratic values—are apt to consider it a waste of time. One such student remarked that she thought the class ought to have very long units, so that they would not have to stop working so frequently to plan new ones! Perhaps all that could be expected in a group unaccustomed to cooperative action,

and hence unskilled in its techniques, would be to plan an occasional trip or special class activity. From these simple beginnings, group participation might be gradually extended to include supplementary projects of various sorts, and finally to the actual selection, planning, and carrying out of a unit of work.

It is the teacher's responsibility to see to it that cooperative action is intelligent and educative. If it bogs down into interminable discussions, bitter conflict, and aimless wandering, it is deserving of all the criticism that has been heaped upon it by conventional educators. The wise teacher will recognize the points at which decisions should be made and who should make them and will keep the group working constructively and effectively. If he cannot do this without resorting to coercion, it is probably evidence that he has made a mistake in judging the level at which the group can work cooperatively. In this case, he will have to start again at a lower level.

After all, the teacher is responsible for striving to achieve the broad goals that the school has set up as well as the goals cooperatively determined with the participation of students. He cannot abdicate this responsibility. Therefore he needs to have an understanding with his group concerning the areas and methods of decision-making at any given time and situation. He may need to set definite limitations upon these areas, and naturally will see to it that these limitations are understood and respected. On the other hand, he should respect decisions that have been made within the prescribed limits and abide by them even though he may be certain that a given decision is a mistake.<sup>30</sup>

9. *Student participation in extra-class activities, while not a substitute for teacher-student classroom curriculum planning, is an effective means of introducing students to democratic living.* Many schools that maintain authoritarian classrooms, and rigid subject requirements, have organized elaborate programs of extracurricular activities—sometimes known as “co-curricular” or “student activities.” In spite of the change in terminology they are still, for the most part, “extra.” These programs, however divorced they may be from the work of the classroom, have significant potentialities for meeting student needs. As a matter of fact, it

<sup>30</sup> For an excellent discussion of leadership conflict, see: *The Dynamics of Instructional Groups*, *op. cit.*, Chapter VIII, entitled: “Characteristics and Functions of Leadership in Instructional Groups” by David Jenkins. See especially his statement on resolving leadership conflicts, pp. 183–184.

is easier to justify them on the basis of the objectives of education in a democratic society than many of the recognized curricular activities. Alexander and Halverson state the case very well as follows:

*In many schools, the best teaching is done in the so-called "extra-curricular program." As a result, the greatest amount of learning takes place in these situations. Teachers, freed from the restrictions of syllabi or from their own self-imposed concepts of what should be learned, guide informally the experience of learners who have been given and have assumed more responsibility for their own activities. Thus, in short, is the best description of the conditions conducive to learning either in or out of the classroom. Infrequently do we find them in the classroom. More frequently they characterize activity programs. The question becomes, how can the classrooms be vitalized by the spurt and energy found in extra-mural activities?*<sup>21</sup>

Through the student council the student has an opportunity to participate successfully in socially significant activities; through assembly programs he may satisfy his need for creative self-expression; through the athletic program he meets many of the health needs and learns many lessons in group responsibility; through the various clubs he may develop hobbies such as photography, collecting, and the construction of gliders and airplanes; through the various social activities, he may solve many of his problems of face-to-face relationships with the opposite sex; through the school newspaper and dramatic societies he meets his need for social recognition.

But these activities are usually outside the regular channels of the life of the school. Some of the critics even insist that all such activities be carried on outside of the regular school hours. However, with all their shortcomings they have potentialities for extending democracy in the school and should be encouraged.

The principal business of the school involves the daily schedule of classes, with the necessary grades and marks, and the accumulation of the sixteen units that are prescribed for graduation. To determine whether an activity is "regular" or "extra," it is only necessary to ask whether or not credit toward graduation is granted for it. The answer reveals the activities that the school actually prizes. It is not uncommon for schools to grant "extra credit" for certain activities carried on outside of the

<sup>21</sup> William M. Alexander and Paul M. Halverson, *Effective Teaching in Secondary Schools*, New York, Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1956, p. 286.



regular classes, such as glee clubs, athletics, or home projects in gardening or canning. Since, however, these activities do not meet the definition of the Carnegie unit, such credits are supplementary, over and above the sixteen units required for graduation. Usually they are not accepted by the colleges to meet entrance requirements.

### **DEALING WITH CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES IS ONE OF THE IMPERATIVES OF A DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL SYSTEM AND IS AN EFFECTIVE MEANS OF IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL PROGRAM**

What is a controversial issue? One of the best definitions known to the authors was proposed several years ago by the Junior Town Meeting League:

An issue is controversial when some of its proposed solutions conflict with the cherished interests, beliefs, or group affiliations of a section of citizens. Fundamental to most controversial issues is the intellectual or emotional attachment of some citizens to the interest or welfare of organizations or groups.<sup>22</sup>

Just what constitutes a "section of citizens" is not clear. Obviously it implies more than one. Conceivably if *one* individual wielded a great deal of power and a proposed solution conflicted with it, his opposition might be sufficient to make an issue controversial. If, for example, one member of a school board objected to the teaching of controversial issues in the school, that would make the issue controversial—until the board finally acted. When the "conflicting opinions" or "cherished beliefs" become charged with emotion and affect the existing power structure of the community, the problem of dealing with such issues becomes crucial.

It is imperative that boards of education, administrators, and teachers recognize dealing with controversial issues as an imperative commitment. A democratic society is always in the process of re-creating and redefining its ideals and values. This it does through the application of the method of intelligence to the solution of its problems. And this implies on the part of the citizen a familiarity with the techniques of planning and working cooperatively and a disposition to settle differences through

<sup>22</sup> *Teaching Controversial Issues*, Columbus, Ohio, Junior Town Meeting League, 1948, p. 5.

conference and discussion, rather than through resorting to violence or to the acceptance of answers given by a totalitarian government that forbids its citizens the right to think reflectively. This places an unmistakable obligation on the school if it is to become society's principal agency for the re-creation of values.

As succinctly stated by the Junior Town Meeting League, the obligation of the school is this:

. . . to provide specifically and carefully for the realistic induction of young citizens into the methods of arriving at rational decisions on the tough problems which must be determined by popular will or consent. No other agency of society even approaches the school in either capability, opportunity, or responsibility for performing this function, which does not exist in a totalitarian social order.

A dynamic school will, by its very nature, bring students face to face with some issues which are yet unresolved. The teachers of such a school will help students to make use of the great reservoir of established values, accepted principles, and proved facts in considering unsolved problems. Students will be led to see that much of our great body of accepted values is based upon the solved problems of the past. They can proceed with the assurance that most controversial issues of today will have commonly accepted answers in the future. They will recognize that the consideration of controversial issues is essential to continuing orderly change.<sup>33</sup>

*Some blocks to dealing with controversial issues* There is general agreement that the high school should deal with controversial issues. Most people accept, in principle, the idea that the expression of differences of opinion on important issues is a part of our American tradition of free speech. Likewise, they accept the "American way" of settling differences—conference, discussion, decision by vote, if necessary. Every four years we get a concrete demonstration of this American way. And no matter who wins the election, the results are accepted—until the time comes to reopen the issues. The American people believe in our way of settling differences—and this belief is a powerful ally on the side of the schools that believe that young people cannot be decently educated unless they have full and free opportunity to deal with every problem that vitally affects them.

But this faith of the people in freedom of thought and discussion must not blind educators to the fact that there are in America powerful

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

forces that wish to gain their own ends and that look longingly—and expectantly—at the schools as their own instrument. Sometimes their purposes may be served by “walling off” the schools from the vital issues of the day. But more frequently they feel the need of the schools as active allies and seek to marshal the powerful influence of youth in their behalf.

But even these powerful, and often selfish, interests do not deny the right of the school *per se* to deal with issues fairly. They stake their case on grounds that are more difficult to combat. They charge that the schools are indoctrinating students into a way of life which they oppose; and in making these charges they utilize all of the devices of the propagandist—name calling, glittering generalities, card-stacking, band wagon appeals, investigation threats, and the like. Often the result is to frighten teachers to the extent that they retreat to their “ivory towers” and teach abstract mathematics, astronomy, and Latin.

Certain types of issues are, of course, potentially more dangerous than others. Perhaps foremost is the group of issues dealing with international relations. Every nation through its treatment of history in the schools tends to develop unquestioned allegiance to the ideals of that nation, sometimes not by deliberate distortion but by what is omitted. America is no exception. So-called patriotic organizations serve as guardians of our sovereignty and see to it that textbooks used in the schools are free from the taint of internationalism. Of course, all people want peace and international cooperation, but not at the expense of giving up any part of our sovereignty. There is no *logical* reason why this attitude should prevent schools from discussing these matters, but often the *fact of discussion* is taken as synonymous with the *acceptance* on the part of the school of a position which is contrary to that of the organization. Because of the difficulty of getting fair publicity, the school which is attacked retreats, and from that time shuns the discussion of these issues.

There are powerful economic groups that are also vitally concerned as to what the schools teach about the free-enterprise system. These groups include chambers of commerce, manufacturers' associations, taxpayers' leagues. These groups frequently join with the super-patriotic organizations in charging a teacher or school with subversion if an issue involving free enterprise is raised.

There are protests involving the teaching of biological evolution that indicate that strong public sentiment opposes dealing with this question. The anti-evolution laws of a number of states are sufficient testimony of

the unwillingness of certain groups to permit schools to have a free hand in dealing with this important problem. Rarely do textbook writers deal comprehensively with the evidence supporting the theory of evolution. This is not because such evidence is not available, but rather because of the fear of public reaction. Even more rarely do teachers deal with the relationship between biological evolution and religious beliefs. Indeed, it is not unusual for students to complete the high-school program without ever having participated in any discussion dealing with this problem. In much the same category are classed problems involving sex relations, venereal diseases, and the like, even though such problems are crucial to the adolescent.<sup>34</sup>

Problems involving racial and minority groups are frequently not discussed realistically in the high school because of the attitude of the community. Yet one of the principal tenets of democracy is respect for human personality. In the long run, education is the only successful method of dealing with intolerance, and if education fails in the task, how shall democracy fare in the future?

Do these obstacles mean that the high school cannot deal effectively with controversial issues? If we answer this question in the affirmative, it means that the school is merely an instrument for perpetuating the *status quo*. If our democratic society is to be refined and re-created, we would then need to turn to other agencies for providing the direction for social changes. If we answer in the negative, then we are obliged to develop a satisfactory plan for dealing with the pressing problems that beset youth in the modern world.

In considering such a plan, attention will be given to two aspects: the general setting of democratic discussion and the techniques which should be employed. The discussion will be developed by the use of generalizations which are intended to serve as tentative guides which teachers may find helpful.

The general setting of democratic discussion In many cases, the difficulties which schools encounter in dealing with controversial issues grow out of various misconceptions of the role of the school by the

<sup>34</sup>For other analyses of difficult areas see: Richard E. Gross, *How to Handle Controversial Issues*, Revised Edition, Washington, D.C., National Council for the Social Studies, 1958; Calvin W. Deam, *Opinions of Virginia Schoolmen Concerning the Treatment of Controversial Issues*, Doctoral dissertation, Bloomington, Ind., University of Indiana, 1956.

teachers themselves and the public, and the failure of the administration to encourage and support free discussion. While conditions vary in different communities, certain generalizations would seem to apply to all or nearly all. These will be stated and discussed briefly.

1. *Freedom of the student to learn, rather than participation in controversial social-action programs in the community, should be the primary concern of the school.* Learning in its best sense involves the "continuous reconstruction of experience." Learning products are identified as changes in attitudes upon the basis of new or deeper understandings, and the acquisition of general and special abilities, habits, and skills. The learning experiences which the school provides for students are directed toward changes in behavior in line with democratic ideals and values. The school provides work experience for the student, not primarily to get the work done, but because such experience enhances growth in line with democratic values. The school provides a studio for painting pictures, not primarily for the purpose of turning out marketable pictures, but because it sees in painting opportunities for learning—that is, for growth. If the school sets up a cooperative store, it is not primarily for service to the community but because in such an enterprise there are significant opportunities for bringing about desirable changes in behavior. In other words, direct experience serves the same general purpose as organized subject matter, in that it promotes *learning* as we have defined it above.

In contrast with this basic purpose of the school, the factory seeks primarily to turn out useful goods at a price that the public can afford to pay. Experience tends to show that this aim can be more effectively realized if workers are satisfied and happy, if conditions for continuous growth are maintained. But this, in our present form of economic organization, is a subsidiary rather than a primary objective. Governmental agencies are established to perform certain functions, to accomplish certain things: the police to maintain order, the fire department to put out fires, the welfare department to provide appropriate living conditions. Only indirectly are these agencies concerned with *learning* as such.

The contrast between the primary function of the school and those of industrial and community organizations has been drawn perhaps too sharply. Perhaps if society were to achieve completely the democratic ideal, many of these distinctions would become blurred, but even then there would undoubtedly be a need for setting up a special agency for the primary purpose of facilitating and promoting freedom to learn. At

any rate, a guiding principle seems to be implicit; namely, *that the test of effective participation by the school in the life of the community is the extent to which such participation promotes the continuous reconstruction of experience.* This would rule out purely routine participation by means of which nothing new is learned. It would also rule out any participation that closes the door on further learning. And this has an important bearing upon one problem of dealing with controversial issues. For when the school takes sides on issues and proceeds to social action, the conditions for further reconstruction of experience are difficult if not impossible to maintain.

For the school to study the different forms of government for the community through interviews, visits to governmental agencies, and perhaps to cities having a given type of governmental organization, by the examination of leading authorities, is without doubt an excellent learning activity. For the school or group to seek by direct action to promote a change in the community's governmental structure is to misinterpret its function, for at this stage *learning* ceases to become the primary objective. For the school to study the underlying causes of a local strike by every possible means is just good sense, for such study is necessary if students are to become intelligent. For the school to promote the cause of the strikers by sending students to the picket lines to prevent workers from entering the plant, or to take sides against the workers by distributing propaganda leaflets in the community, is to turn the school into an agency for promoting propaganda. All this is not to say, of course, that individual students, as *citizens*, should not be encouraged to take any action that seems appropriate to them, but this is quite apart from the school as an organized educational agency. It may be argued by some that the role of the school as set forth in this discussion is insignificant and passive. On the contrary, such an interpretation makes it possible for the school to become a dynamic force in social reconstruction, even though it does so *indirectly* through the release of intelligence. Furthermore, apart from the principle set forth above, the public is not likely to be attentive to the insistence of a school that it deals with controversial issues fairly and without bias if the school has been engaged in controversial social action which clearly reveals its bias.

2. *The school should be devoted to the method of intelligence in dealing with problems of human concern.* This generalization flows naturally from the preceding discussion, for "thinking is the method of intelligent learning." To employ the techniques of problem solving: (1)

defining the problem, (2) setting up hypotheses, (3) discovering, analyzing, and applying pertinent data to the hypotheses, and (4) arriving at tentative conclusions and plans of action upon the basis of the evidence, is essential in every aspect of the school program. In dealing with controversial issues this method provides the guiding principle for the teacher and students to follow. The teacher should not expect to draw a salary from the public treasury while propagandizing for his favorite beliefs. He must scrupulously provide the means for getting at the truth of a given issue, and this involves careful selection of reading materials which present differing judgments and opinions, providing for interviews with individuals representing differing viewpoints, selecting audio-visual aids that provide balance, and, in general, maintaining such conditions as will keep open the free play of intelligence. This does not mean that he may not take sides or present his own point of view, for he is obligated to do this at the appropriate time. It does mean, however, that he should not "load the dice" in such a way that the students are led to regard the teacher's opinions as having more weight than any other authority. Intelligence cannot operate in an atmosphere charged with coercion—physical or intellectual. Furthermore, the school can win the confidence of the public only to the extent that it succeeds in convincing the public that teachers and students, when they deal with controversial issues, do so as part of a serious and unbiased quest to discover the truth concerning such issues. As Griffin points out: *"Unless the public believes that teachers are actually conducting open inquiry, rather than peddling their own preferences, either the curriculum or the teachers' freedom as citizens is almost sure to be adversely affected."*<sup>35</sup>

Devotion to the method of intelligence does not mean that the teacher may not use propaganda or "slanted material." Outside the classroom the student is bombarded with propaganda in the press and on the radio and television. A part of his education is to learn to evaluate such propaganda in terms of recognized principles for supporting and safeguarding conclusions. When propaganda materials are kept out of the classrooms or libraries, a great disservice is rendered to students, for they are prevented from becoming intelligent in the detection of propaganda. Schools have been criticized because some citizen or organization discovered a book or article favorable to communism or socialism, or because a textbook appears to support some brand of collectivism. The test

<sup>35</sup> Alan Griffin, "The Teacher as a Citizen," *Educational Leadership*, X, 8 (October, 1952). (Italics in original.)

ought to be: Are such materials utilized to make the student more intelligent about the issue? If they are, the presence of such material in the curriculum is justified. To insist upon "screening out" such materials is really "throwing out the baby with the bath."<sup>36</sup>

3. *The school should appeal to the public to help safeguard its right and obligation to deal with controversial issues.* In the final analysis, the public will decide what the school is to teach. It will elect boards of education pledged to carry out its wishes. These boards, in turn, will appoint school officials congenial to their purposes. Therefore, any policy for dealing with controversial issues will ultimately be sanctioned or rejected by the people of the community.

But the fact that controversial issues exist at all implies that the public is divided, not necessarily into two opposing factions, but rather into many groups representing many shades of opinion. For example, in most communities can be found many differing religious beliefs, ranging from extreme fundamentalism to atheism. Likewise, attitudes on capital and labor range from belief in the complete domination by the employer to just as complete domination by the labor unions. It would not be difficult to find in any community extreme isolationists, ardent internationalists, and many other people whose views fall somewhere between the two extremes. Furthermore, the tradition of freedom of thinking and of speech is deep-seated in the American people. The desirability of settling differences through conference and discussion is well established. Consequently the social climate is potentially congenial to freedom of discussion. Through appropriate leadership this potentiality can be converted into actuality. The success and popularity of public forums and town meetings is evidence that this is true.

It is to this tradition of democratic discussion that the high school must appeal for the right to deal with controversial issues, limited, of course, by the interest and maturity of the students. But the school must come to the public with this appeal with clean hands. The school must be able to demonstrate its competency to deal *fairly* with issues. The success of such an appeal involves, perhaps more than any other factor, confidence in the teaching staff.

Given assurance by precept and example that the school will use

<sup>36</sup> For a very helpful discussion of the relation of our democratic commitment to the classroom, see: H. Gordon Hullfish and Philip G. Smith, *Reflective Thinking: The Method of Education*, New York, Dodd, Mead and Company, 1961, Chapter XV, entitled: "Committed to Whom and for What?"



every means at its disposal of applying the method of intelligence to social issues, will the public permit such discussion? This is an open question, and we must admit the presence in every community of powerful pressure groups that seek to indoctrinate the public with their points of view, and that are not interested in having all sides of issues presented. In some communities, these forces may prevent such discussion, and we have abundant illustrations of situations where this has occurred. Nevertheless, the school is obligated to continue to try to create a climate of opinion congenial to the idea, and to deny the possibility of achieving it is to deny the ultimate triumph of democracy.

One agency which the school cannot afford to overlook in this appeal is the community council, which ideally represents a cross-section of public opinion. Here the representatives of public education may work shoulder to shoulder with representatives of other institutions and agencies in planning for the improvement of community living. Ways in which students and teachers may participate *educatively* in formulating plans and carrying them into effect are many and varied.

The establishment of citizen committees for the purpose of providing for responsible participation of laymen and for creating a climate of opinion favorable to dealing with controversial issues is also a step in the right direction.<sup>27</sup>

Another highly effective way of getting the community behind the teaching of controversial issues in the schools is the cooperative establishment of a school policy on the subject. An excellent illustration is a bulletin issued by the Board of Education of Elizabeth, New Jersey.<sup>28</sup>

The opening statement of how the idea originated and the manner in which the policy was formulated is significant:

<sup>27</sup> See pp. 352-356.

<sup>28</sup> *A Policy for Handling Controversial Issues in the Elizabeth, New Jersey Public Schools*, Elizabeth, New Jersey, Board of Education, 1950. In order to determine the present status and effectiveness of this statement of position, the authors addressed a letter of inquiry to J. Harry Adams, until recently Superintendent of Schools, Elizabeth, N. J. (now Assistant Commissioner of Education for New Jersey). He replied as follows: "The controversial Issues Policy of 1950 is still in effect in the Elizabeth Public Schools (March, 1961). Undoubtedly, the policy has served to prevent many brush fires from becoming conflagrations. Perhaps its most effective use has been as an educational instrument with organizations, agencies, and other interested groups. In a number of cases we were able to prevent a conflict merely by presenting a copy of the policy to the complainant, of course, with explanations. My opinion is that any city school administration needs an umbrella of this sort in these days of controversial problems."

... This policy is intended to clarify for all concerned the determination of the Elizabeth Board of Education to preserve, protect and increase appreciation for the fundamental rights and responsibilities of good American citizenship through education.

The need for a policy on controversial issues was identified by a group known as the Curriculum Advisory Council of the Elizabeth Public Schools. The membership of the Council is 25 persons including two Board of Education members, three representative lay citizens, and 20 members of the professional staff, including classroom teachers and the Superintendent of Schools. Foreseeing the importance of such a policy in these troublous times, the Council established a subcommittee which carried through the necessary research and developed a first draft. The Council then submitted the policy through the Superintendent to the Board of Education for consideration. After extended consideration and with some modification, the Board of Education adopted the Controversial Issues Policy as it appears in this pamphlet. Since its adoption, comprehensive effort has been made to develop public understanding of the policy through the Parent-Teacher Associations and other community organizations. As a result, the teachers and other citizens of Elizabeth are quite aware of the determination of this community to preserve and extend fundamental American rights and responsibilities.<sup>39</sup>

*Criteria for determining the appropriateness of controversial issues,* the responsibility of teachers and the administration are clearly set forth as follows:

*Criteria*

1. The issue must not involve the indoctrination of religious beliefs, a practice prohibited by state law.
2. The treatment of the issue in question should be within the range of the knowledge, maturity, and competence of the students.
3. There should be study materials and other learning aids available from which a reasonable amount of data pertaining to all aspects of the issue may be obtained.
4. The inclusion of the issue should require only as much time as is needed for a satisfactory study by the class, but sufficient time should be provided to cover the issue adequately.
5. The issue should be current, significant, real, and important to student and teacher. Significant issues are those which, in general, concern considerable numbers of people; are related to basic principles; or, at the moment, are under consideration by the public, press, and radio.
6. The proper avenues by which arguments on controversial questions reach

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

students in school are through qualified teachers, the students themselves, and the other curriculum channels, approved by the Board of Education.

### *Responsibility of the Teacher*

1. A teacher in a free society has the obligation to uphold, protect, and defend the fundamental freedoms as documented in the history of our American democracy.
2. The teacher is responsible for creating in the classroom an atmosphere of freedom for students to raise questions dealing with critical issues of the time and for maintaining an atmosphere conducive to the free, spirited, and friendly interplay of ideas.
3. If the teacher does not feel qualified for an exploration of a controversial issue, he should guide the pupils to the proper sources, and qualified persons who can help them in arriving at their own opinions, based upon facts.
4. It shall be the duty of teachers to see that all facts, evidence, and aspects of an issue are presented honestly.
5. The teacher should acquaint pupils with books, newspapers, and other materials which present data on all aspects of a controversial issue under discussion.
6. Statements presented and opinions expressed during discussion on controversial issues are to be carefully scrutinized by the teacher to make sure they are based on substantiated facts or credible evidence. The teacher should exercise special care to avoid misunderstanding.
7. The importance of the authenticity of facts and the purpose for which they were gathered must be stressed. Propaganda, in any form, should be clearly identified as such by teachers and students and its intent should be clearly understood.
8. Although it is the teacher's responsibility to bring out the facts concerning a controversial question, he has the right to express his opinion, providing his students understand that it is his own opinion and is not to be accepted by them as the authoritative answer.

### *Responsibility of Administration*

1. The following assumptions are basic to the administration of a policy which provides for the inclusion of controversial issues in the schools' curriculum:
  - a. That the teacher is competent to handle controversial issues in the classroom within the fields of his preparation and training only.
  - b. That the principal, as the administrator of his building, bears a major responsibility for the administration and supervision of the curriculum, selection of materials, and methods of instruction, and, therefore, is alert to and continuously aware in general of what is being taught in his school.
  - c. That citizens have the right to suppose that controversial issues are

being presented fairly, and to protest to the Board of Education if convinced that unfair, biased, or prejudiced presentations are being made.

2. A teacher who is in doubt concerning the advisability of discussing certain issues in the classroom should confer with his principal as to the appropriateness of the issue. If the principal and the teacher are unable to establish agreement, the issue shall be referred to the Division of Instruction. The Division shall refer the matter to the Superintendent of Schools if necessary.
3. No individual or group may claim the right to present arguments directly to students in schools. Such a "right" would make the schools battlegrounds for all kinds of controversies. The teacher, with approval of principal and/or Superintendent of Schools, should feel free to invite representatives of various viewpoints to discuss issues with classes in order to inform students on all aspects of controversial questions.
4. The Board of Education shall provide a hearing in accordance with American principles of justice, whenever, in the judgment of the Board, materials of instruction or the work of an individual teacher are seriously attacked by individuals or organized groups in such manner as to interfere with the normal administration of this policy.<sup>40</sup>

In concluding this discussion of the general setting for the discussion of controversial issues, it must be emphasized that the administrator owes the teachers the obligation to protect them in the exercise of their legitimate functions. If he fails to do so, all the high-sounding platitudes about academic freedom will be of little avail. There can be no academic freedom for teachers if the administrator does not stand resolutely back of the teachers. On the other hand, the administrator is also charged with the responsibility of protecting the public against propaganda by the teachers. In this task, too, he should have the support of the teaching group.

**Some techniques of democratic discussion** The success of any plan for dealing with controversial issues will obviously depend upon the techniques which teachers use in promoting democratic discussion. The following generalizations are suggested as guide lines which the teacher may find helpful.

1. *The issues should grow out of the evolving learning situation.* Thinking begins where there is a "forked-road" situation in which the learner must stop and take his bearings before proceeding on his way. Likewise, issues do not ordinarily come ready-made to be handed out by

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5.

the teacher for discussion. More frequently they arise in the process of planning or exploration. For example, the explosive race issue might grow out of a discussion of the United Nations. The issue of religion in politics is almost sure to arise in any realistic discussion of an election. The reading of a novel, such as Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, raises the explosive issue of capital-labor relations. In these cases, the issues that grow naturally out of on-going learning situations may well take the center of the stage.

This does not mean, of course, that the teacher is not free to raise important issues if the pupils fail to do so. As a matter of fact, he is obligated to help the students to see all of the significant implications of the learning situation. Thus in a discussion of the theory of evolution as applied to human beings, the issues involving science and religion might appropriately be raised by the teacher at the proper stage of development. So long as the students accept the issue as being important for them to explore, it does not matter who raises it.

2. *The discussion should be so planned and organized as to bring out as many differing points of view as possible.* One of the weaknesses of the debates that are so frequently the major discussion activity of the high school is the fact that only two sides are presented. This is what is called "the two-valued orientation." Undoubtedly, these debates frequently result in warped points of view because of the form in which the propositions are cast and the established technique of dealing with them.

For most people political questions have only two sides. As a matter of fact, under a two-party system, the voter is reduced to expressing his preference for one of two candidates, and if he isn't very careful he will be led to believe that one represents the *good*, and the other the *bad*, with no middle ground. Our present-day judicial system of dealing with criminal offenses, in which the accused is found "guilty" or "not guilty," encourages the "either-or" type of thinking.

The "multiple-valued" orientation clearly promises more for arriving at sound decisions, and teachers and discussion leaders should use every possible means of encouraging the exploration of *all* fruitful hypotheses. This important point suggests that the conventional debate should give way to group discussions involving the entire class, forums, round tables, and panels, where all shades of opinion may find a place. Unlike the debate, these forms of discussion encourage the suspension of judgment until all aspects of the issues have been explored.

3. *Good discussion requires that problems, words, and terms be clearly defined.* Obviously, if there is no agreement upon the meaning of such words as democracy, communism, and fascism, there can be no worthwhile discussion of conflicting political ideologies. These words are all high-level abstractions for which it is difficult to find referents. Until fairly recently, high-school students received little training in defining terms except in the areas of mathematics and science, and in these fields there was very little carry-over to other fields of knowledge. The present-day emphasis upon general language, the nature of proof, and semantics has pointed the way to new possibilities of increasing the effectiveness of discussion.

The difficulty of conducting successful discussions of race questions is a good illustration of the necessity for defining terms. In this area, many words such as Negro, Jew, Jap, or Russian have emotional connotations which interfere with clear discussion. The individual has acquired in unaccountable ways abstract meanings of such words without having examined them in terms of reality. A discussion that proceeds from such a basis gets nowhere because the terms used are quite divorced from the everyday world of fact. It is the business of the leader, usually the teacher, through appropriate questioning to get students to define and illustrate the terms they use. This may not only save much time but also help students to clarify their values. Sometimes prejudices are directed toward abstractions rather than toward reality.

4. *Good discussion requires that pertinent data bearing upon the issues be available and utilized in arriving at decisions.* Perhaps the one thing that brings discussion into disrepute with teachers and students is the continued expression of opinion without supporting data. Such discussions usually resolve into name-calling and accomplish nothing. If the discussants, for example, are not in possession of the known facts about "race superiority," they are hardly in a position to make judgments about the comparative native intelligence of Negroes and whites. If the discussants have not read widely the literature dealing with public ownership or control of utilities, they are hardly in a position to reach worthwhile decisions. Here the discussion leader is obligated to keep pressing for the use of significant data, the weighing of authorities, and the suspension of judgment until as much of the evidence as possible is in. Hasty judgments in class discussions tend to perpetuate that failing which is so characteristic of life outside the school. All too frequently the teacher

unconsciously contributes to hasty conclusions, because he fears that he is not "covering ground." The teacher will have to decide to sacrifice certain traditional values if he expects to help his students to do clear thinking upon pertinent problems.

5. *The discussion leader should try to secure the widest possible student contributions to the discussion.* Very commonly group discussions fail because the contributions of all members of the group are not elicited. Stenographic reports of discussions frequently reveal a tendency on the part of the teacher and a very few students to do all or nearly all of the discussing. This is especially true when the discussion is "forced" by the teacher and is of no particular concern to the majority of the students. The teacher comes before the class and says, "Today let's have a discussion of the causes of the Civil War." What he really wants is to find out whether or not the students have read the textbook. The loquacious students respond readily, and for emphasis the teacher repeats their answers, improving on them if possible. Very soon the topic is exhausted, and only a few students have participated at all. The difficulty, of course, is that the students are not facing a problem that is vital to them, and they therefore feel no particular urge to participate except that participation may improve their monthly grades. The situation would have been quite different if the discussion has been planned cooperatively and had centered upon the impact of the Civil War on our living today. Then students would have felt that they had a unique contribution to make to the solution of the problem. In this situation the responsibility of the teacher shifts from having the students "recite," to leading the discussion in such a way that all have an opportunity to contribute and conclusions are reached, however tentative they may be.

Another thing that interferes with wide participation is the lack of a climate of permissiveness. Students are afraid to express themselves, lest they subject themselves to the ridicule of the teacher or the other students. The utilization by the teacher of the principles of sound group process is very necessary. Individuals must be respected, and differences in personality, opinions, and interests must be utilized to enhance the quality of the discussion.

6. *Good discussion requires that decisions of individuals and groups be respected.* Democracy cherishes respect for human personality and this means, among other things, that the teacher is bound to respect the decisions which students reach through discussion, assuming, of course, that such decisions are within the limitations set in advance. The spirit of

free inquiry assumes that the solution of problems is to be determined by the use of the method of intelligence. There can be no preconceived solution. The teacher may well be disappointed in the outcome, if it doesn't agree with his own thinking, but he violates the method which he professes to cherish if he tries to impose his own conclusions on the group. If he does this, he is merely inviting his students to *play* with the forms of democracy, and students are quick to discover that they are expected to do nothing more than that. The counterpart of such action is a situation in which the administrator asks teachers to make decisions but refuses to honor them unless they are the "right" decisions. The teacher should be disappointed if he does not succeed in getting his students to solve their problems by the use of the method of intelligence. Certainly he is justified in protecting the conditions for reaching intelligent conclusions, and he may insist upon a re-examination of all available data; but beyond that he cannot go, if he is to continue to have the respect of his students. And this holds for the decisions of individuals and minority groups as well as for those of the majority. Where the decision involves group action of some sort, of course the minority must conform to the majority decision, for that too is a part of democratic living. For example, if after careful and extended study the majority of the senior class decides that Quebec meets more of the criteria of a good trip than does New Orleans, the best interests of the class would undoubtedly be served if *all* students conformed to the group judgment. If, on the other hand, the class were trying to arrive at a conclusion concerning a local capital-labor dispute, all shades of judgment should be cherished and respected. In this situation, the objective would be to develop a better understanding, on the part of each student, of the nature of the dispute. Group consensus is not necessary.<sup>41</sup>

#### **A SOUND PROGRAM OF GUIDANCE IN THE HIGH SCHOOL IS ORGANICALLY RELATED TO THE CURRICULUM AND TO DEMOCRATIC STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE CLASSROOM**

There is probably no area of high-school education in which more confusion exists than in the meaning of guidance and its application to

<sup>41</sup> For an excellent presentation of discussion methods and a participant's checklist for "taking stock" of his participation, see a pamphlet by R. E. Lee, *Getting the Most Out of Discussion*, Washington, D.C., American Library Association, 1956.



the curriculum and classroom. And this confusion is more than academic, for it results in confused practices in the high school.

**Historical background of guidance** This situation is more readily understood if guidance is considered in its historical perspective. The educational use of the term began in 1908 in connection with vocational placement, and for some time was applied only to the organized efforts of a school to find suitable jobs for high-school students in terms of their desires, vocational aptitudes, and training. So firmly did this limited concept become entrenched that even at the present time many people think of guidance primarily in terms of helping young people to find their places in the vocational world. As the high-school population increased and the formal curricular offerings expanded, a need arose for educational guidance, and the concept was extended to include the help given to the student in choosing the curriculum best fitted to his present and future needs. The increased complexity of the culture, the increased number of broken homes because of mounting divorce rates, increased sensitivity to problems of mental hygiene and problems of health—all these contributed to the expansion of the meaning of the term, so that present-day writers classify guidance activities in terms of the many facets of the help given to young people in solving their problems, e.g., vocational, moral, social, and educational. In most cases these new functions were taken over by the school as supplementary activities without changing to any great extent the formal curriculum offerings. An exception to this statement is the addition to the formal curriculum of such courses as "occupational civics," "economic civics," or "guidance." These courses were usually offered early in the junior high-school period and were designed to orient the student primarily to the world of vocations, and secondarily to the educational opportunities offered by the school. In the larger schools, these added functions were performed by new personnel known as counselors, deans of boys, deans of girls, or co-ordinators. In the smaller schools, they were assigned to the regular classroom teachers. In both cases, however, the classroom and guidance functions were regarded as quite separate and distinct. Many modern writers still hold to this distinction, as we shall see when we examine the present meaning of the term guidance.

**The meaning of guidance** Authorities in the field of guidance seem to be in fair agreement on the meaning of guidance. The earlier defini-

tions do not differ materially from those accepted today. A typical definition of the earlier period is as follows:

Guidance in the secondary school refers to that aspect of the educational program which is concerned especially with helping the pupil to become adjusted to his present situation and to plan his future in line with his interests, abilities, and social needs.<sup>42</sup>

Several years later, Chisholm expressed essentially the same idea this way:

Guidance seeks to have each individual become familiar with a wide range of information about himself, his interests, his abilities, his previous development in the various areas of living, and his plans or ambitions for the future. Guidance then seeks to help him become acquainted with the various problems of social, vocational, and recreational adjustment which he faces. Out of the training and experience the individual gets in meeting and solving his problems while in school, guidance aims to develop in him insight into the solution of his problems of living as well as a creative initiative whereby he will throughout life be able to meet and solve his own problems adequately.<sup>43</sup>

Both of these statements are but different ways of stating the purpose of education in the modern school. One might substitute the word "education" for guidance without in any way changing the meaning of the quotations. If this be true, why use the term guidance, at all?

The definitions stated above are further reinforced and extended by the definition of guidance offered by Stiles and Dorsey:

The major emphasis in guidance, as it is being advocated today, is placed on the provision of self-determination or self-guidance and on the function of guidance being mainly a matter of enabling individuals to make intelligent decisions on their own account. Most of the definitions of guidance, some of which are quite complex, can be stated simply by saying that *guidance is a process of helping individuals and groups of individuals to make choices relative to recognized problems, the solution of which will lead to continued adjustment.*<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Shirley A. Hamrin, and Clifford E. Erickson, *Guidance in the Secondary School*, New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1939, pp. 1-2.

<sup>43</sup> Leshe L. Chisholm, *Guiding Youth in the Secondary School*, New York, The American Book Company, 1945, p. 3.

<sup>44</sup> Lindley J. Stiles, and Mattue F. Dorsey, *Democratic Teaching in Secondary Schools*, New York, J. B. Lippincott Company, 1950, p. 238. (Italics in original.)

A more recent pronouncement reiterates the emphases which the above definitions place upon *self-discovery*, *student initiative*, and *problem solving*. It concerns the creation of "a favorable school climate for guidance," the basic concepts of which are these:

- (1) Teaching and guidance go hand in hand. Guidance is not something apart from teaching and the curriculum;
- (2) Guidance helps students make non-directive choices that will affect their present plans and plans for the future;
- (3) Guidance serves a diversity and mobility of capacities and interests of students. The more prescriptive the secondary curriculum becomes for all students, the narrower function for guidance for each student.<sup>43</sup>

Again it will be noted that the emphasis is on helping youth to make "non-directive" choices, and upon curriculums that provide for flexibility.<sup>44</sup>

At present two forces are having enormous impact upon the concept of guidance and its administration. The National Education Defense Act of 1958, under Title V, allotted 15 million dollars to "Guidance, Counseling, and Testing." Since the enactment of this legislation workshops and study programs dealing with guidance and counseling have been held on a nationwide basis. While it is too early to predict the result, it is fair to assume that the emphasis of the program will be upon the securing of adequate manpower for national defense. Certainly this was the intent of the Congress. Is this emphasis compatible with the concepts stated above?

A second significant force is the series of Conant Reports dealing with recommendations for the junior and senior high schools. These reports place much needed emphasis upon guidance and counseling. Conant recommends that "there should be one full-time counselor (or

<sup>43</sup> Ellsworth Tompkins, "Guidance," *NASSP Spotlight*, No. 47, 1 (March-April, 1961).

<sup>44</sup> For a comprehensive report on research in guidance and counseling, see, "Guidance and Counseling," *Review of Educational Research*, XXX, 95-179 (April, 1960). The first chapter, entitled "The Philosophical Foundations of Guidance and Personnel Work" by William D. Wilkins and Barbara Perlmuth concludes a review of the research as follows: "Recent books and articles about personnel work show little evidence of a considered philosophical position or psychological point of view. A basic philosophy is implied in some, but explicit in few. There is real need to develop general principles and a theoretical foundation." (p. 102).

guidance officer) for every two hundred fifty to three hundred students in the high school." Since he also endorses the comprehensive high school, it follows that this counselor would deal with students with widely differing backgrounds and interests. This recommendation is certainly to be commended—provided that the counselors conceive their responsibilities in terms of the democratic philosophy of guidance expressed above. There is some evidence that this is not the case.

For example, the program for the "academically talented," which includes the top 15 to 20 per cent of students as determined by scholastic aptitude or other tests, is quite rigid. *Recommendation 9: The Program of the Academically Talented* reads as follows:

A policy in regard to the elective programs of academically talented boys and girls should be adopted as a guide to the counselors. In the type of school I am discussing the following is strongly recommended as a minimum:

Four years of mathematics, four years of science, in addition to the four years of English and three years of social studies; a total of eighteen courses with homework to be taken in four years. This program will require at least fifteen hours of homework each week.

Many academically talented pupils may wish to study a foreign language or an additional course in social studies. Since such students are capable of handling twenty or more courses with homework, these additional academic courses may be added to the recommended minimum program. If the school is organized on a seven- or eight-period day (*Recommendation 2*), at least one additional course without homework may also be scheduled each year.

If as school policy a minimum academic program including both mathematics and a foreign language is recommended to the academically talented pupils and their parents, the counselors will have the problem of identifying as early as possible the members of the group. It may well be that, in the next lower 10 or 20 per cent of the boys and girls in terms of scholastic aptitude on a national basis, there are a number who ought to be guided into similar but less rigorous programs.<sup>47</sup>

Conant points out that such a program does not preclude the counselor from "advising exceptional programs in exceptional cases." However, it is evident that all or nearly all students who are capable of pursuing an academic program "should be guided into" such a program. The

<sup>47</sup> James B. Conant, *The American High School Today*, New York, The McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1955, pp. 57-58 (Italics added.) See also the more recent report by the same author: *Education in the Junior High School Years*, Princeton, N. J., Educational Testing Service, 1960.

counselor should also "*persuade over-ambitious parents of a child with little academic ability*" that eleventh- and twelfth-grade mathematics, physics, and foreign languages are too difficult. To be certain that counselors are performing their function of guiding their bright students into the prescribed program, Conant recommends that boards of education require principals to submit an annual academic inventory listing approximately the upper 15 per cent of the academically talented students in terms of national norms, together with summaries of their high school programs. Thus the board of education can determine the effectiveness of the counseling program.<sup>48</sup>

Conant used the academic inventory to gain information concerning the more able students (120 I.Q. or above) graduating from all Maryland high schools with 100 or more students in the graduating class.<sup>49</sup> He reports the "generally good record" of the boys. In 90 per cent of the schools, at least half of them studied mathematics and science for seven years. However, in contrast with the "good record" of the boys, in only 33 per cent of the schools did at least half of the girls study these subjects for seven years.

If the guidance and counseling program is to help students to develop their talents and interests, it does not seem to the authors that the counselors' failure to "persuade" more girls to take seven years of mathematics or science can be looked upon as necessarily bad counseling. Boys and girls with I.Q.'s of 120 or above possess many potentialities and interests. Certainly some of them might well pursue advanced work in the humanities, or the arts, or even in some vocational field. Democracy needs all sorts of talents, and in the judgment of the authors, good guidance counselors should not try to channel the talents of students into fields that they, or some expert, believe to be superior to other fields.

While Conant allows for exceptions, it seems clear to us that his program tends to pattern the program of as many students as possible to include heavy emphases upon mathematics, science, and foreign languages. It is true that he recommends that "all students should be urged to include music and art in their elective programs,"<sup>50</sup> but with the heavy academic programs requiring 15 to 20 hours of homework, little or no time remains for these so-called soft subjects.

<sup>48</sup> See Conant, *op. cit.*, Recommendation 11: The Academic Inventory.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 119-122.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

Making due allowance for exceptions, we believe that the Conant guidance program, while laudable in many respects, is not consistent with a democratic philosophy of guidance.

**The classroom teacher and guidance** The present emphasis in the literature on guidance is upon the expert who devotes all or nearly all his time to counseling and testing students. However, it must not be forgotten that the curriculum, if it is designed to meet the needs, solve the problems, and extend the interests of boys and girls, is the principal instrument which the school possesses for guidance, and the classroom teacher is the key to the entire process. In the rush to extend guidance services the classroom teacher is frequently left out of the picture. Why the neglect? The answer is to be found, in part at least, in the character of the traditional high-school curriculum and the nature of the teachers preparation.

While theoretically it has always been claimed that a curriculum made up of organized subjects met the needs of students, as a matter of fact these subjects have been far removed from the actual problems which youth face in the modern world. What problems are met, for example, through the typical course in world history, classical or modern language, advanced mathematics, or literature? For the student who expects to attend college and has been strongly motivated to prepare for the college entrance examinations, such subjects undoubtedly meet a need, however remote the actual content may be from his present-day living. But what of the large numbers of students who have no desire or expectation of going to college? For them these subjects represent mere hurdles to be jumped in the process of getting a high-school diploma or arriving at the end of the compulsory education period. In a wider sense, of course, the "good" student finds security and a sense of achievement in being able to perform successfully the tasks set by the school, however meaningless they may be in terms of his present living. Some subjects may even provide a necessary means of temporary escape from the stern realities that he faces on the playground or in his social life outside the school. If the above picture is accurate, then it is fair to ask where youth turns for a solution of his problems.

As one way of remedying the situation, schools have adopted comprehensive homeroom programs, which have a multiplicity of purposes, such as record keeping, supervised planning for class or school social affairs, and guidance. In most instances homerooms are rather ineffective

for guidance purposes, not only because of lack of time, but also because the organization is external to the on-going life of the students, both in and out of the school. In many schools the homeroom has degenerated into an administrative device for checking attendance, making announcements, keeping pupil records, and preparing reports.

If the curriculum is to become an effective instrument for guidance, a drastic reorganization is necessary.<sup>51</sup>

Another block to effective guidance is the traditional role of the teacher as a maker of assignments and a hearer of recitations. For his new responsibilities as a counselor as well as a teacher, a new type of teacher preparation is needed. The familiar plans of building up majors and minors in organized subject-matter fields, without any reference to the use of the subject matter in learning, with separate courses in psychology and methods of teaching, general and special, and a short period of practice teaching, will have to give way to drastic reorganization which prepares teachers for their new responsibility. The tendency among teacher-education institutions is to add new courses in guidance and field work to the already overcrowded curriculum, but this is, at best, a make-shift. The gap between professional and academic courses will have to be closed, and prospective teachers will need to be taught to see knowledge as an instrument for helping students to solve their problems. This is a task which few teacher-education institutions are prepared to undertake. Meanwhile, school administrators will need to develop in-service programs in the form of workshops or study groups, possibly with the assistance of college personnel, for the purpose of re-educating teachers in terms of their new functions. As such programs become widespread, the teacher-education institutions will need to reorganize to meet the new demands. In the second place, as teachers assume more and more responsibility for individual as well as group instruction, traditional notions of class size and teaching loads will have to undergo change. To ask the teacher to assume new responsibilities without corresponding readjustment in the number of daily student contacts, and in class size, is a way of insuring the failure of the enterprise.

**The role of the guidance specialist** It must not be assumed that all of the problems which students face can be satisfactorily solved through programs of curriculum development or better preparation of the classroom teacher. There will still be need for personnel that is especially

<sup>51</sup> See Chapters VI, VII, and XIV.

equipped to give certain specialized types of assistance to students. Expert assistance will be needed to carry out the following functions, among others.

1. To coordinate the group and individualized instruction which is the principal responsibility of the classroom teacher.
2. To administer programs for promoting a better understanding of the student, through the securing of adequate data and the utilizing of these data in helping the student to make wise decisions in terms of his immediate and long-range goals.
3. To aid in vocational placement of students both in the part-time work program of the school and in full-time employment at the end of the period of formal education.
4. To deal with difficult cases of physical or psychological maladjustment which require special training and skill of a psychiatric nature.
5. To maintain a follow-up of graduates and drop-outs and to interpret data regarding such a follow-up for the purpose of improving the guidance program and the total school program.

In addition to carrying out these specialized functions the guidance counselor needs to be well prepared in the curriculum area. In this capacity he may help individual teachers in recognizing the guidance possibilities in their respective fields. He may also aid teachers in the development of resource units, not only in the general education program, but also in the specialized areas. A guidance counselor, with a broad point of view, might well serve as the curriculum director of the school.

It seems obvious that the program of guidance which we have set forth would facilitate democratic student participation in the classroom by breaking down the barriers between guidance and education, and freeing the teacher to work with students on their individual problems, as well as those which are common to the group.

This concludes the presentation of the various aspects of community, school, and classroom that have important bearings upon effective student participation. The next chapter presents some illustrations of how teachers work with students to develop learning units in the classroom.

## SUMMARY

This chapter has been built around three major generalizations that deal with the conditions under which satisfactory student participation can best be developed.



1. *Effective student participation in the high school is contingent on the creation of a democratic climate for learning and an understanding of group processes in the classroom.*

The climate of the high school today is certainly influenced by the charge of the critics that the schools have become "soft," that students do not work hard enough and are relatively undisciplined. This, say the critics, is partly responsible for the wave of juvenile delinquency that is sweeping the country. This criticism has resulted in many high schools in more rigid requirements, "tougher" examinations, and more externally imposed discipline.

Student participation does not flourish under such a climate, since it is an attempt to translate the basic principles of democracy in terms of the day-to-day life of the school. Contrary to the belief of many people, it does not mean that students are allowed to do as they please, but rather that the activities that make up the curriculum of the student be planned and carried out through the cooperative thinking of the teacher and his students. The teacher does not abdicate, but assumes such control over the situation as will facilitate the achievement of democratic values and the efficient carrying out of purposes and plans.

A satisfactory climate for student participation can be facilitated by democratic administrator-teacher relationships, by the development of a common philosophy of education which provides a guide for curriculum development and classroom procedures, by a program of pre-planning by means of flexible teaching guides, and by a good public relations program which acquaints laymen with the philosophy and program of the school and provides for lay participation in various aspects of the program.

Since teacher-student planning is a process rather than an end result, it is to be expected that the extent of such planning will be conditioned by the ability and willingness of the students to assume their proportionate share of responsibility. The teacher has to start at the level on which the class can think and work cooperatively and move to higher levels in terms of the maturity level of the group and its growth in the ability to assume greater responsibility. To do this, the teacher should be familiar with the basic principles of group process.

2. *Dealing with controversial issues is one of the imperatives of a democratic school system and is an effective means of improving the quality of student participation in the school program.*

Teaching of controversial issues is inseparably related to the ideals

and values of democratic living. Therefore, if the school accepts as its supreme obligation the progressive enrichment of living, it must insist on its right to deal fairly with every significant controversial issue that is of interest to students and at their maturity level. Along with this right must be placed the obligation to refrain from propagandistic activities which are certain to undermine the confidence of the community in the integrity of the school.

Close cooperation with community groups is essential to good understanding, but the school should not forget that its primary obligation is to promote desirable changes in the behavior of the students rather than to serve the community directly.

The right of the school to deal with controversial issues can be safeguarded if teachers practice satisfactory techniques of discussion, and if their relationships with the community indicate their competence to deal with important issues with which the community is concerned.

3. *A sound program of guidance in the high school is organically related to the curriculum and to democratic student participation in the classroom.*

The development of separate and distinct guidance programs came about as a result of the formalism of the curriculum which has been an obstacle to providing optimally for the meeting of the needs of students. If the high-school curriculum is organized to meet the needs of students, the distinction between guidance and education is eliminated, and the classroom teacher becomes the center of the "guidance" program as he works from day to day helping students to solve their problems.

There is, of course, need for the guidance specialist to work with teachers and students in situations requiring special training and skill. The guidance specialist in working with students should avoid utilizing undue persuasion and pressures. In other words, he should possess and practice a democratic philosophy of guidance and counseling.

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## *Teachers and Students at Work: an illustrative unit*



IN PREVIOUS CHAPTERS of Part III, the authors have attempted to set forth the nature of general method and how it might be applied to the learning process in the classroom. It was pointed out that such application would result in certain gains, such as (1) the elimination of the daily-ground-to-be-covered conception of education, (2) the promotion of dynamic, functional learning, (3) the provision for direct, first-hand experience, (4) the normal day-to-day functioning of democracy in the classroom, (5) the incorporation of guidance into the living structure of the curriculum, and (6) the teaching of controversial issues on a sound basis.

This chapter provides a practical classroom illustration of most of these more or less theoretical principles. At the close of the chapter, the authors present what seems to them to be valid evidence bearing upon the application of these principles. This illustration is a first-hand account of *what actually happens* in a classroom when the teacher is freed from the bonds of traditional subject matter and methodology.

### PROBLEMS OF RACIAL SEGREGATION<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This is a report of a unit of work in an eighth-grade class in the Ohio State University School. The class was conducted by L. Jane Stewart, with the cooperation of several specialized-education teachers: Jeanne Orr, related arts; Irvin Slesnick, science; Donald R. Bateman, language arts; and Frieda M. Heller, librarian. The report was prepared by Yung Dug Lee, a Korean teacher-educator, and is a part of his doctoral study entitled, *The Contribution of The Ohio State University School to a Proposal for the Development of Core Programs in the Campus Sec-*

### The Setting

The Ohio State University School is an integral part of the Center for School Experimentation. It provides an educational program from the kindergarten through the twelfth grade.

The unit described is a part of a six-year general-education program which might be characterized as a modified *Type IV Core* based upon loosely structured problem areas (see Chapter VI). The eighth grade consisted of 15 boys and 13 girls, a total of 28 students, all but two of whom had worked with the same core teacher during the previous year.

For convenience of presentation, the observer classified the activities carried out in the core block of time into six categories: (1) unit study, (2) free reading, (3) language arts and creative writing, (4) class business meetings, (5) social activities, (6) guidance and counseling, and miscellaneous activities. It is not easy to determine the exact amount of time spent in each of these six groups of activities, because the activities are not definitely scheduled in advance but rather are the outcome of the cooperative living and study of the students and the teacher. However, the observer approximates the time distribution as follows:

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Total Hours During the Quarter</i>
The core-block of time	165 hours (2 hours and 45 minutes per day)
The learning unit	65-70 hours (65-70 minutes per day)
Free reading	20-24 hours (20-25 minutes per day)
Language arts and creative writing	40-45 hours (4 hours a week)
Class business	10-12 hours (1 hour a week)
Social activities	13-17 hours
Other activities	4-6 hours

These figures concerning the hours spent in each of the eighth-grade core activities during the quarter should not be considered the standard for time scheduling because other groups may schedule differently according to student needs. Moreover, it should be emphasized that the eighth grade has an experimental language class scheduled four hours per week during the core-block of time.

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*ondary Schools of Korea*, Unpublished doctoral study, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1959. The description of the work of the core class is based upon continuous observation of the group in action for one quarter and a series of conferences with the core teacher. It is a verbatim account with only minor supplementation and editing.



*Courtesy, The Ohio State University School*

The large time-block in the core program, designed primarily for the development of the learning unit, is also utilized for independent work on special projects, free reading, and the like.

An eighth-grade group in the Ohio State University School, Columbus, Ohio, takes time out from their unit on "Problems of Racial Segregation" to work on individual interest activities.

### **Preliminary Activities**

On the first day of the school year the teacher and students reviewed the previous year's agreements for living together. These included being thoughtful of others, keeping the noise level down, taking turns in speaking, listening to the person speaking, and asking for help when needed. The teacher reminded the group that as seventh graders they had spent considerable time in trying to clarify the meaning of core and suggested that they take another look at this question before considering the selection of a learning unit. Five small groups were set up, with a chairman



and recorder for each. The groups were asked to make a list of the characteristics of core as they had experienced it last year. Each group reported, and the results were carefully examined and consolidated by the whole class. The following characteristics were listed:

1. Core is the most important class.
2. We are all together in core.
3. It is the hub of our schedule.
4. Core is not a special subject but a tie-in of several.
5. This is a place to improve a subject that you can't get anywhere else in the program.
6. Core is the special center of the class.
7. Core is the combination of a number of classes.
8. Where we learn to think for ourselves and be more independent.
9. Where we learn a wide variety of subjects.
10. Where we get a background in world affairs and learn how to express ourselves.
11. Core helps us in choice of good literature, helps in grammar, creative writing, spelling, current affairs.
12. We learn to pursue our own interests.

In addition to this list the students accepted the following characteristics which were suggested by the teacher:

1. A block of time
2. Pupil-teacher planning
3. Problem-solving approach
4. Guidance
5. Required of all
6. Evaluation
7. Fundamentals

Following the defining of the meaning of core, the class spent about half an hour in clarifying the meaning of democracy. The point was made that since the term democracy seemed to figure so largely in the philosophy of the school and the purposes of core, it would be well to take a look at this term to see if everyone was talking the same language. A dittoed statement distributed by the core teacher provided a framework for this discussion. In discussing what democracy means the members of the class agreed that: (1) democracy means freedom; (2) democracy means self-government; (3) democracy means differences of opinion;

(4) democracy means tolerance and patience; and (5) democracy requires training and plenty of practice. They seemed to feel that the hard part is to play hard to win and yet be considerate of the other person. Core seemed to be a place where the students saw possibilities for having many experiences to help them learn to make democracy work.

The next preparatory step for selecting the learning unit was to re-evaluate the criteria for choosing a unit which the class had formulated a year ago. Four new ideas were combined with the previous criteria, and the following list was agreed upon by the class:

The core unit should:

1. Be what we need, not just what we want.
2. Be something we haven't done before.
3. Be interesting to all of us.
4. Not be too broad or too narrow.
5. Have enough resources: books, magazines, trips, films, radio, speakers.
6. Not be too difficult or too easy.
7. Be chosen from one of the 14 problem areas.
8. Be able to use some of the teachers in art, music, science, etc.

### Selecting the Unit

With these preparatory steps completed, the students began to suggest possible problems or units. About twenty possible problems were suggested and evaluated in terms of the criteria. Of these there were eight problems which seemed promising for study:

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of a democracy and the Russian form of government?
2. What should be the role of the United States in world affairs?
3. What are the conflicts between the state and national governments?
4. How can we build toward peace in "one world"?
5. Should we stop nuclear testing and what are the problems involved?
6. How can we better understand the religions of the world?
7. What is involved in the present conflict over the segregation issue?
8. How can we learn through international cooperation more about the world?

Each student selected one of these problems for an exploratory study of its appropriateness as a unit of study. A form designed for recording the findings of the exploratory study was provided by the core teacher. The core teacher and the librarian worked very closely with students in the completion of the forms.

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5. This is a place to improve a subject that you can't get anywhere else in the program.
6. Core is the special center of the class.
7. Core is the combination of a number of classes.
8. Where we learn to think for ourselves and be more independent.
9. Where we learn a wide variety of subjects.
10. Where we get a background in world affairs and learn how to express ourselves.
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Each student selected one of these problems for an exploratory study of its appropriateness as a unit of study. A form designed for recording the *findings* of the exploratory study was provided by the core teacher. The core teacher and the librarian worked very closely with students in the completion of the forms.

After a few days of individual exploratory study, the class was divided into eight groups in terms of the eight suggested problems. Each small group had a series of group discussions as well as time for individual work. The core teacher and the librarian were frequently called upon by each group whenever their help was needed. When the groups were ready to report to the class, one or two groups were scheduled each day. Each group report was followed by discussion. As a result of these small-group reports and the discussions which followed, two problems were favored by the majority of students. They were: "Problems of Religions" and "Problems of Racial Segregation." However, at this point the class learned that the ninth graders had already chosen a unit on "Comparative Religions." Accordingly, the class decided to study racial segregation and to postpone the unit on religions until the Winter Quarter.

When the class had finally decided on the unit "Problems of Racial Segregation," two and a half weeks time had passed. During this period, of course, other core activities were also carried out. The description of these activities will be presented later. Before the class proceeded to plan for the unit study, each student was asked, as a homework assignment, to submit a written self-evaluation in terms of the following items:

1. Describe how the process of choosing the unit looked to you. Illustrate your points.
2. What part did you play in the choosing? What do you think about how you operated during these 2½ weeks?

### **Planning the Unit**

The very next day after the class had selected the core unit, the librarian brought to class a truck of study materials related to the unit. Each student selected materials best suited to him. The class, at the beginning of the study of the unit, agreed that the purpose of the unit was to understand better the problems of segregation and to seek better solutions for them. As the students read they were to list specific questions and issues to be dealt with in the unit study. A total of 82 questions and issues was gathered, discussed, and classified into eight major aspects of the unit. These were: (1) definitions of terms, (2) historical aspects, (3) scientific aspects, (4) educational aspects, (5) employment aspects, (6) social aspects, (7) civil rights aspects, and (8) housing problems.

A continuous emphasis was to be placed on the solutions of the problems instead of stopping at the fact-finding level.

### **Working on the Unit**

The class decided to work on some of these problems on a total-group basis and on others on a small-group basis. First of all, the class studied the definitions of the terms which frequently appeared in the materials they were using. Several students served at different times as chairmen of the class discussions. Whenever certain situations developed, the teacher reminded the students to evaluate their discussion procedures and to make needed changes. Segregation, prejudice, friendship, peace, human rights, freedom, and hatred were the major terms treated in the group discussions. In order to have better discussions, each student prepared a sheet of written definitions he had developed from dictionaries and other reading materials.

When the students decided to try to symbolize these terms, an art teacher was called in to help the class learn more about symbolization. Two hours were utilized for the art teacher's instruction on symbols and for the symbolical drawings by the students. Meanings and harmony of colors, arrangement of the total picture, and levels of abstraction were the major considerations to be emphasized in the symbolical drawings. The drawings were exhibited on the bulletin boards, and each student was asked to make an oral and written explanation of his abstract drawing. As students expressed their interest in more abstract work (or symbolical drawing), a one-hour period was scheduled for each of two groups to work on this problem in the fine arts studio under the guidance of the art teacher. Students were divided into two groups to work at different times because the fine arts room is not large enough for all 28 students to work at the same time.

While the discussion of terms was being carried on, students were reading about the history of racial segregation in the United States. The need for careful note-taking was emphasized. The discussion of the historical aspects of the unit followed almost the same pattern of group discussion as that used for the discussions of definitions of terms. Whenever a new word was used by any student he was asked to define the word for the class.

For the study of the scientific aspect of the unit, a science teacher was

called upon to lead the discussion. Major emphasis in this aspect of the unit was on the "evolution of race." The problem of evolution was studied in terms of such factors as (1) overpopulation, (2) variation, (3) struggle for existence, and (4) survival of the best-adapted by the process of natural selection. The science teacher introduced various books and articles for study. As the discussion proceeded there emerged a number of possible science projects to be carried out by individuals and groups. Approximately 10 hour periods were used by the science teacher with this group, and this was the largest participation by a single teacher of special-interest areas. The major conclusions in the study of the scientific aspect of the unit were that genetically the human race is unique, and that people do not differ from each other.

When the class realized that about two-thirds of the quarter had already passed and that five more aspects remained to be considered, the teacher and students re-evaluated their procedures and decided to work on the remaining aspects on a committee-work basis. Five committees were organized around the remaining five aspects: education, employment, housing, social discrimination, and civil rights.

It should be pointed out here that the librarian was also continuing to work on the selection of appropriate materials. As the result of the cooperative work with the core group, she was able to make an annotated bibliography on the unit. The librarian also supplemented the bibliography with her personal comments on the authors and the contents of the materials. Students were deeply impressed by the librarian's presentation, and they hastened to the library to get the books they thought would be valuable.

### **Culminating Activities**

The committees used the work period for committee meetings and individual research, and, as the end of the quarter approached, they planned how to organize their group reports, how to present them, and how to utilize their resource personnel. During this period of preparation for the culminating activities, the entire class met together for a few periods to evaluate the work they had completed and to schedule the core activities for the limited remaining core periods of the quarter. Each student was asked to submit a written outline of the work he had done within the committee as well as in his individual research report.

A variety of methods of committee reporting were used. These included: (1) a panel discussion, (2) a model Board of Education meeting, (3) a model Senate Committee meeting on Civil Rights, and (4) a symposium.

*In connection with their report, the committee on housing invited, as a speaker, the Executive Head of the Columbus Urban League. The committee had prepared in advance a series of 19 questions to be answered by the speaker. Following are three typical questions:*

*Is there a shortage of housing for negroes in Columbus?*

*During negro slum clearance, where do the negroes go?*

*Are there any laws concerning the rights of a negro to own property in a white neighborhood?*

Two other speakers were also invited in connection with other committee reports: one was a newspaper editor who had special interest and experience in studying and reporting on segregation problems; the other was a negro senior girl in the school who had experience in living in a white neighborhood.

Four films were viewed in connection with the unit. In addition, charts were made and maps were used. In addition to the contributions made by the librarian, a science teacher, and an art teacher, the eleventh-grade core teacher recommended to the class three references which she considered to be excellent. A student interviewed her mother who is a public-school teacher to find out the problems of public schools in dealing with mixed racial groups. More than 150 books and pamphlets were used by these eighth-grade students during the development of the learning unit. This number does not include the many articles in various periodicals which were also used by students.

#### BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, AND FILMS UTILIZED BY THE CLASS

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- Commager, H. S. (ed.). *Documents of American History*. Sixth ed., New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1958.
- Conrad J. *Jim Crow America*. Philadelphia: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc., 1947.
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- Gittler, J. B. *Understanding Minority Groups*. New York: Jim Wiley & Sons, 1956.
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- Logan, Spencer. *A Negro's Faith in America*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1946.
- McWilliams, Cary. *Brothers Under the Skin*. Rev. ed., Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1956.
- Moon, Bucklin. *The High Cost of Prejudice*. New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1947.
- Moon, Bucklin (ed.). *Primer for White Folks*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1946.
- Myrdal, Gunnar. *The American Dilemma*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944.
- Odum, H. W. *Race and Rumors of Race*. Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1943.
- Ottley, Roi. *New World A-Coming*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1943.
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Watkins, Sylvester C. (ed.). *Anthology of American Negro Literature*. New York: Modern Library, 1944.

#### *Films*

*Americans All*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1945, 16 min., sd., b&w, \$80.

*Boundary Lines*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1947, 10 min., sd., color, \$120.

*Does It Matter What You Think?* New York: British Information Service, 1945, 15 min., sd., b&w, \$55, Rent \$2.50.

*Picture in Your Mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1949, 16 min., sd., color, \$165.

### EVALUATION OF THE UNIT

The final evaluation of the unit was made after all the committees had completed their reports. The final evaluation period was divided into two parts: one for written evaluation and the other for oral evaluation. The teacher prepared the evaluation sheet which included the following questions:

1. We planned to cover the history, scientific background, current problems, and solution. Do you think we covered these satisfactorily? Explain your answer.
2. How well do you feel that the following were covered? Did you learn much about each? How could they have been improved?  
     Housing  
     Employment  
     Education  
     Social discrimination  
     Civil Rights
3. On the back of this sheet answer this question: How well have you performed (reading, speaking, writing, listening) during this quarter's study?

The oral evaluation which was made by the total group was initiated by the teacher who raised questions about how the students thought they achieved the purposes they had set up at the beginning of the study. The discussion covered their planning, individual work, group work, resource materials and persons, timing, and organization. While favorable comments were made by the students concerning the resource materials and resource persons and some of the individual group activities, the following represent their suggestions for improvement:

1. Some aspects of the problem received too much time and energy of the class resulting in the sacrifice of other equally important aspects.
2. Each committee was too independent of the others.

3. Even in a given committee, each individual played his role separately, and there was little integrating effort as a group.

The following is the core teacher's evaluation of the unit of work:

**STRENGTHS IN PLANNING:**

1. Taking time to re-define core helped new students adjust and re-emphasized the purposes for those who were still a bit vague.
2. Using and revising last year's criteria resulted in economy of time and evaluation of criteria.
3. A more direct approach in helping students understand the difference between a problem and an issue proved to be of value.
4. Working in groups to investigate possible unit studies without regard to a special interest in the study was good self-discipline. Most of the class thought it challenging to try to put forth much effort in investigating a study they weren't initially attracted to.
5. The students were increasingly able to think for themselves and "stand up and be counted" when a controversial issue was involved.
6. The final struggle to set up the whole year's work resulted in students' better understanding of when and how to compromise. They became more insightful as to the difference between compromising in order to move ahead and compromising when a principle is involved.
7. The students had many opportunities to struggle with the problem of choosing between good and good and how different this is from choosing between good and bad.

**STRENGTHS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNIT OF WORK:**

1. Scope was identified and modified as the study developed.
2. Art experiences helped students express their emotional reaction to problems of segregation.
3. Work with the art teacher helped students understand the principles involved in good bulletin-board display.
4. Speakers and resource persons were carefully prepared for in advance.
5. Real involvement in the problem was shown by group reports such as the one presented by the education committee when they simulated a school-board meeting in a small southern town, created the type of community and presented the problems in such a situation and possible solutions. The audience found themselves, too, involved in role-playing during the discussion period.
6. Intelligent use was made of visual aids during reports—e.g., charts, maps, chalkboard, and films.
7. There was much evidence of individual growth, social sensitivity on the part of the total group, and an increased desire to learn. Learning really became respectable.
8. There was increased depth in the thinking of specific individuals and the group generally.

## WEAKNESSES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNIT OF WORK:

1. The boys were too vocal; they tended to dominate discussions.
2. The scope was rather unrealistic but in spite of this the students covered an amazing amount of material and plumbed the depths.
3. There was frequent repetition of the same points.
4. The distinction between arguing and discussing was not clear to many, especially the girls who would often label a heated defense of a position as an argument.
5. A number of the group felt it was a mistake to modify our basic plan as conceived in the beginning of the study; however, they revealed a rather inflexible attitude.
6. Teaching the use of the *Reader's Guide* would be better placed in the seventh year. A few individuals had been instructed by the librarian or the teacher prior to this year.

## GENERAL COMMENTS:

1. Intellectual curiosity increased amazingly in this group.
2. The students became increasingly able to share materials intelligently instead of hoarding good books.
3. There was general improvement in moving quickly and quietly to a new activity.
4. The students were introduced to and handled very well the "buzz" session technique.

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Another important activity that the eighth-grade core group and the core teacher planned, carried out, and evaluated was a party for the seventh graders. This party was held for the purpose of introducing seventh graders to the upper-school social program. The project was suggested during one of the class-business meetings in the middle of October. Some of the planning took place during the class-business-meeting periods, but most of the work was carried on outside of the regular meeting periods.

The students wanted to have a theme for the party which could be followed in decorating the party room and in carrying out all activities. Six possible themes were suggested by the students and the teacher; these were examined in terms of possibilities of visualizing them in the decorations. Through democratic procedures the class decided on the theme: "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea," the title of a book by Jules Verne. Since all the students had read this book, they knew what they could do with this theme. The stage was designed as an underwater cave

and the surrounding area portrayed a typical underwater scene. The entrance to the party room was designed to resemble a bookcover for the book, and the program also was tied in with the theme.

Six committees were organized: (1) Entertainment, (2) Name Tags and Invitations, (3) Lighting, (4) Records (Music), (5) Refreshments, and (6) Decorations. Each committee had its own responsibility for that aspect of the party, but practically all students contributed to all committees by suggesting new ideas to other committees and by making articles to be used by the Decorations Committee.

The Entertainment Committee worked closely with the Music Committee in order to have a well-organized entertainment program. A twenty-minute "floor show" was planned and carried out by the committee under the guidance of the core teacher. Obviously, the show was closely related to the theme. The Committee for Name Tags and Invitations made the name tags in various shapes which were appropriate to the theme; they prepared and delivered an invitation to the seventh graders. At the party, this Committee also served as a reception committee. The class president and the social chairman, who served as host and hostess of the party, respectively, also greeted the members of the class and their guests at the door. The committee invited the parents of four students to serve as "chaperons." It was the responsibility of the committee to make sure that the chaperons were having an enjoyable evening. In addition to the chaperons, other parents attended the party. The students appeared to enjoy having them. The Lighting Committee worked with a related arts teacher in selecting and placing the spotlights. The work of putting up the lights had to be done after school because the room used for the party was scheduled for use by other classes during the school day. The Music Committee consulted a music teacher concerning the selection of music appropriate to the theme. This committee also worked with a related-arts teacher in learning how to operate the record player which was in charge of this teacher. Since this record player is very sensitive and expensive, the students needed to be specially trained for using it. The Refreshments Committee worked closely with a home-economics teacher in planning the menu and in preparing the refreshments. The Decorations Committee worked closely with a fine arts teacher in planning and executing the decorations for the party room. Various kinds of model fish and undersea plants were made by the entire

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class. Some work was done during the core period but most of it was done at home.

The whole class carried out a research project in science in order to learn about the characteristics of the underwater world. Some of the model fish made by the students were so well done that the science teacher asked the class to exhibit them in one of his science classes.

Preparation for the party continued for slightly more than three weeks, although only about 13 hours were actually spent in preparation. The party was held in the evening and, in the observer's judgment, was very successful.

On the day after the party, the class met for an evaluation. Special emphasis was placed on finding out what was good or bad, why it was good or bad, how to correct or improve social activities. Each committee led the evaluation discussion on the part of the event for which that committee had taken responsibility.

As an indication of appreciation for the party, the seventh grade sent a "Thank you" note to the eighth grade and planned a return party for the eighth graders during the next quarter.

As their part in the Thanksgiving Day celebration, the class participated in the High School Assembly. The Christmas season is usually a big event for all classes, but the eighth-grade class realized that their unit study was under time pressure because of the nearness of the end of the quarter, and they decided to have a simple party lest the unit study be interfered with unduly.

## **FREE READING**

Free reading in the eighth grade is usually scheduled at the beginning of each core period which follows the physical education class. As students arrive in the core room from the physical education class, they begin immediately to read. As they read books of their own choosing, the teacher spends the time in individual guidance. Sometimes this period is only a few minutes long, at other times it may be more than an hour long depending on the teacher's judgment. On the average, 20 to 25 minutes daily are devoted to free reading.

Although the core teacher and the librarian play significant roles in guiding the reading of the students, great emphasis is placed on the mutual assistance provided to students by other students when desired. In

one of the written self-evaluations, a student wrote, "I have broadened my reading experience quite a lot, with the help of other boys."

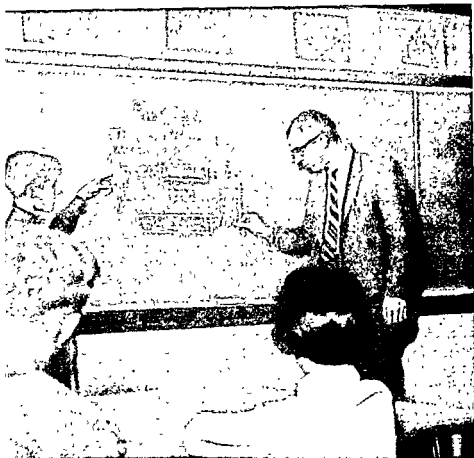
An analysis of the reading records of the eighth graders for this one quarter indicates that the number of books read by individual students ranges from four to a maximum of 35 books. Each student read on the average about eight books during the quarter. More than 90 per cent of the books read were fiction. According to the core teacher and the librarian, most of these students can read at the average level of the eighth grade or higher.

### LANGUAGE ARTS AND CREATIVE WRITING

As noted earlier, four hours per week within the core-block were allocated to language arts and creative writing. During the quarter in which the unit on "Problems of Racial Segregation" was developed, an experimental program in linguistics<sup>2</sup> was put into effect. It was undertaken in an attempt to discover whether modern linguistics could provide an approach to the study of language structure that was both simpler and more accurate than the old techniques of grammar. Students worked approximately three hours per week with the language arts teacher. The core teacher was an active participant in the sessions, and on many occasions both the core teacher and the language arts teacher worked with the total group or with smaller groups as the need arose.

Considerable time was spent studying syntax and developing a language for talking about language. Basic patterns of the English language were analyzed and the relation of these to the development of a personal style of writing was emphasized. Writings of Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, and Robert Penn Warren were among those examined by members of the class. In analyzing particular sentences and passages from these authors students were encouraged to discover new structures and subsequently to use them. Pieces of writing in which the students consciously attempted to use the new structures (or structures they were not using well, or not using at all) were assigned daily. And each paper

<sup>2</sup> For a more extended treatment see Donald R. Bateman, *Speculations Concerning Symbolism, The Communication Core, Language, Studies in English*, Bulletin Number 1, Columbus, Ohio, Center for School Experimentation, The Ohio State University, 1959, (Mimeographed). This general approach to the study of patterns of English is similar to that found in Paul Roberts, *Patterns of English*. New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956.



*Courtesy, The Ohio State University School*

The large time block of the core program provides opportunity for carrying on a wide variety of activities, experimentation, and the use of resource personnel from specialized areas.

An eighth-grade core group in The Ohio State University School, Columbus, Ohio, is experimenting with a special approach to language arts teaching. The language arts teacher is working with students on a linguistic analysis of a poetic structure.

was read carefully by both the language arts teacher and the core teacher and suggestions concerning structure and content noted.

It was hypothesized that students who had had some organized opportunities to explore the many varied structures would exhibit some significant changes in their own writing over a period of time. A comparison of "before" and "after" selections from a number of eighth-grade

writers revealed that many changes did take place over the time during which they had worked on syntax and related language study. The later writing was richer in detail. The sentences tended to be longer, and the units they are composed of were more carefully interrelated. And there were a number of structures that are not customarily observed in eighth-grade writing.

## CLASS BUSINESS

The class spent a one-hour period weekly on class business. The primary purpose of this meeting is for self-government by the use of democratic procedures. The following outline illustrates the typical class business meeting:

1. Call to order
2. Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting
3. Treasurer's report
4. Old business
  - Evaluation
  - Proposals and decision-making
5. New business
  - Proposals
  - Discussions
  - Decision-making
6. Adjournment

During the Autumn Quarter, the major problems discussed and acted upon were the planning of parties and money-making projects, discussions of self-discipline, and discussions of the problems related to the Student Council. Several students were elected by the class either as representatives to the Student Council or to sub-committees of the Council.

The eighth-grade core teacher participated in the business meetings, and she structured the meeting somewhat whenever it became desirable because of students violating some democratic principle. However, there was one meeting that was more structured than usual. In this meeting, the ninth-grade core teacher, who also served as a faculty representative to the Student Council, was invited to participate and to give his expert guidance in conducting a democratic business meeting.

## **GUIDANCE, COUNSELING, AND MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES**

As far as informal and incidental guidance is concerned, the entire period devoted to the core is a continuous process of guidance. However, in this section the more or less formal and organized guidance and counseling activities will be described.

The core period on the first day of the Autumn Quarter was entirely devoted to orientation and to the selection of electives. The core teacher announced the appointment of the new director of the School, and students were informed that in relation to this they were going to be involved in some experiments. Two new students were introduced to the class. Procedures for reporting tardiness and absence were explained.

Making choices among the arts electives was an important problem and took more than an hour. Four teachers representing the courses in related arts, home arts, vocal music, and science came to the class and each of these teachers gave a brief explanation of the nature of the course, its schedule for the school year, and the limitation of the number of students to be enrolled in the course. The explanation was followed by questions and discussion. Special attention was given to securing a balanced grouping of students among these four courses insofar as the balancing could be achieved without disregarding the interests and needs of any student. Moreover, each student was asked to secure his parents' approval of his choice.

The library orientation activity was also a significant experience for the eighth-grade core group. A two-hour period was set aside for this activity. The librarian showed the class a film strip concerning the methods of effective use of the library. Along with the showing of the film strip, the librarian gave supplementary illustrations and answered the questions of the students. Following the instruction, the class went to the library in order to gain experience in the actual use of the library. During this time (approximately one hour) the library was closed to students of other grades. Procedures in using the *Reader's Guide* and in locating books, articles, stories, poems, movies, and plays were practiced by each student.

In order better to guide students in their selection of free reading books, the Iowa Silent Reading Tests were administered. On the basis of the results of the tests, interviews were held by the core teacher with most

of the students. Helping students understand their own strengths and weaknesses in reading and providing for means of improvement were the consistent purposes of the counseling during the free-reading period.

During the Autumn Quarter there were three special behavior-problem cases, and for each case a comprehensive parent-teacher conference was called. One student who had manifested aggressive behavior was referred to a staff member whom the staff considered to be well qualified to handle problem cases. Another student was referred to an expert in the University Counseling Center. These two students continued their work in the normal classroom situation. There was no feeling of "being singled out" as problem cases, as they continued to live and learn together with the other students. The establishment of very close cooperation among the teacher, parents, and the professional counselor in helping these students, is the responsibility of the core teacher.

In an attempt to help students develop self-understanding and to help the core teacher better to understand her students, an hour period in the quarter was devoted to having each student write what he thought about himself. These writings served as important data for guidance and counseling of individual students.

## SUMMARY

Some Generalizations Concerning the Work of the Core Group:

1. It involved a large time-block (2 hours and 45 minutes per day).
2. Within the time-block in addition to the core unit several types of activities were carried on: guidance and counseling, business activities, social activities, free reading, experimental language arts, and the like.
3. The students and teachers worked democratically. This was manifested in selecting the unit, deciding on work plans, working together as a class and in small groups, cooperative evaluation of the unit, and co-operative planning of social activities.
4. The emphasis throughout the unit was upon the use of reflective thinking, rather than upon arbitrary action. The teacher consciously helped the students to "intellectualize" the democratic processes involved in the work of the class.
5. The work of the class provides an excellent illustration of the use of a large number of resources, rather than dependence upon a single text.

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6. The group drew upon the community leaders for help in understanding some of local problems involved in the unit.

7. The core teacher drew upon specialists on the school staff, e.g., an art teacher, a science teacher, a language arts teacher, and the librarian to help in specialized aspects of the work of the group.

8. The core unit illustrates how various disciplines may be drawn upon in solving common problems of living.

9. The work of the group provides a good illustration of the principles of continuous cooperative evaluation.

10. The unit of work shows the possibilities of learning the fundamentals functionally as a normal part of the day-to-day work of the classroom (the exception to this generalization was the experimental work in linguistics, carried on by a language arts teacher).

11. The report indicates that the structure of the core program through pre-planned problem areas served as a rough guide in the selection of the learning unit without violating the principle of democratic student participation.

12. The report indicates how a controversial issue can be handled with a reasonable degree of objectivity.

13. The account of the work of the class illustrates the normal steps in carrying out a unit of work, e.g., (1) deciding on the unit, (2) initiating the unit, (3) working on the problems that the class decided were important, and finally (4) bringing the work to a close and making a final evaluation of it.

#### SELECTED REFERENCES

For references dealing with the nature and development of learning units, see bibliographies at the end of Chapters VI, IX, X.

For additional descriptions of learning units developed in different curriculum designs, and dealing with a wide variety of problem areas, see the following:

F. B. Stratemeyer, H. L. Forkner, M. G. McKim, and A. Harry Passow, *Developing a Curriculum for Modern Living*, Second Edition, Revised, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1957. Chapter XIII describes the work of a tenth-grade class with particular reference to the activities carried out in a "persistent problems of living" core program. The core studies developed during the year by this class concerned

problems of international relationships, i.e., the world's trouble spots, American foreign policy, and the impact of nuclear energy on domestic and foreign policies.

Learning units entitled: "What Are the Major Problems Facing American Education Today?" and "The Seas Around Us" are described in Lucile L. Lurry and Elsie J. Alberty, *Developing a High School Core Program*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1957, Chapter VI.

An over-all description of a democratically functioning class is presented by Rosalind M. Zapf in *Democratic Processes in the Secondary Classroom*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959. Units on orientation to the school and democratic living are described in Chapters II and IV, respectively. Zapf's description of an earlier unit on democratic living appears in Roland C. Faunce and Nelson L. Bossing, *Developing the Core Curriculum*, Second Edition, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1958, Chapter VI.

Louise E. Hock and Thomas J. Hill provide a number of descriptions of general-education programs and examples of learning units in *The General Education Class in the High School*, New York, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1960. In Chapter III some varying points of view concerning general education are discussed and units illustrating them are presented. Among the units briefly described are: "Understanding Our Westward Growth Through Literature," "Candidates and Campaigns," and "Producer-Consumer Economics."

The learning unit on racial segregation presented in this chapter was an account by an observer. For another such account, see Willard L. Leeds, "Core Classes in Action," *Education*, LXXIII, 273-296 (January, 1953). The observer describes learning units carried out by two core groups over a period of one year in an unidentified midwestern junior high school. An eighth-grade group developed ten units around the over-arching theme: "Understanding American History," e.g., "Go West, Young Man," while a ninth-grade group developed eight units utilizing the broad theme: "We Are the Builders of Tomorrow," e.g., "Democracy vs. Communism."

Butterweck and Spessard describe a two-year program of unified studies which begins with a study of the community in which the students live, and culminates with the students planning and furnishing a home located in the hypothetical community which has been developed by the group. See Joseph S. Butterweck and Katharine H. Spessard, *The Unified Curriculum, A Case Study, Grades 7-8*, New York, Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1960.

For an example of a unit developed in a rather specialized area, see the description of a home economics unit entitled, "Dressing Myself on a Budget" in Jean D. Grambs, William J. Iverson, and Franklin K. Patterson, *Modern Methods in Secondary Education*, Revised Edition, New York, The Dryden Press, Inc., 1958, Chapter VI.

**SELECTED AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS—PART III****FILMS** (All are 16mm sound)

**AND NO BELLS RING.** 60 min., color, National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D.C.

Recommended changes in secondary education include flexible class size, individual and small group study, greater use of audiovisual materials and techniques. Accompanying booklet, "New Directions to Quality Education."

**BROADER CONCEPT OF METHOD.** (Two b&w films and two silent filmstrips), McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., Text-Film Dept., 330 W. 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.

Part I, Developing Pupil Interest, 13 min.

Part II, Teachers and Pupils Planning and Working Together, 19 min.

Emphasizes contrast between traditional and modern teaching procedures. Clear presentation of techniques of teacher-pupil planning.

**FREEDOM TO LEARN.** 27 min., b&w or color, National Education Association, Public Relations, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

Discusses how and why controversial issues are taught in the classroom.

**THE INFLUENTIAL AMERICANS.** 52 min., b&w, Carousel Films, 1501 Broadway, New York 36, N. Y.

Team teaching, large classes, language laboratories, airborne television project. Originally a CBS News presentation.

**LEARNING THROUGH CO-OPERATIVE PLANNING.** 18 min., b&w, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York 27, N. Y.

Shows how an all-school project can contribute to the learning of so-called fundamental skills.

**OUR TOWN IS OUR CLASSROOM.** 21 min., b&w, United World Films, 1445 Park Avenue, New York 29, N. Y.

Produced by U.S. Army, originally for use in occupied areas. Shows the teaching of pupils in school about the government of their town. Instead of learning from books, the students sit in on town council meetings, in court, and in meetings between citizens and officials.

**PRACTICING DEMOCRACY IN THE CLASSROOM.** 22 min., b&w, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1150 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois.

A co-operative approach to teaching American history by using methods that give the students opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of a desirable citizen of a democracy.

**PROBLEM METHOD.** (Two films), b&w, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., Text-Film Dept., 330 W. 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.

Part I, Defining the Problem and Gathering Information, 18 min.

Part II, Using the Information to Solve the Problem, 16 min.

Depicts a high-school social studies class using the problem method under the guidance of the teacher in examining the role of pressure groups in a democracy.

**SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY,** 14 min., b&w, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., Text-Film Dept., 330 W. 42nd Street, New York, N. Y. A follow-up filmstrip also available.

The problem of the separation between many schools and their community; the losses which both suffer thereby, and the benefits which both gain when they cooperate.

**SECURE THE BLESSINGS.** 27 min., b&w, National Education Association, Public Relations, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

In school the children of America learn the ways of liberty which they must practice to keep America free. Typical decisions which involve democratic way of living.

**WE PLAN TOGETHER.** (Companion film to *Learning Through Co-operative Planning*), 21 min., b&w, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York 27, N. Y.

### FILMSTRIPS

**A CORE CLASS TELLS ITS STORY.** 72 frames, b&w, silent with captions, guide. Ball State Teachers College, Muncie, Indiana.

Shows how an eighth-grade core class is organized, how goals and plans are made with pupils, how a unit of work is carried to completion, and how the children are evaluated.

**A CORE CURRICULUM CLASS IN ACTION.** 46 frames, b&w, silent, with text. Audio-Visual Materials Consultation Bureau, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

Follows a typical ninth-grade core class from its first class meeting through various teacher-pupil planned activities and the final evaluation of the work done.

**MAKING TEACHING EFFECTIVE.** 40 frames, b&w, silent with text. Teaching Aids Laboratory, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

Excellent illustrations of sound educational practices.

**THE SCHOOL LOOKS AT THE COMMUNITY.** 36 frames, b&w, silent, discussion guide. Audio-Visual Materials Consultation Bureau, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

Experiences of a school system in making a community survey, illustrating that an awareness of the community's make-up and needs will help to improve school-community relations.

**TEACHERS AT WORK.** (Five filmstrips, color, silent with captions and text frames), Teaching Aids Laboratory, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

1. Interacting with Children, 51 fr.
2. Using the 3R's to Widen Learning, 49 fr.
3. Broadening the Curriculum and Enriching School Living, 59 fr.
4. Developing and Extending Themselves, 28 fr.
5. Contributing to Educational Advance, 51 fr.

An integrated series presenting all aspects of a modern teacher's work with children in the elementary grades. Most of the ideas presented are equally applicable to the secondary level.

## RECORDINGS

**EDUCATIONAL GROWTH SERIES.** microgroove, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  rpm. Educational Recording Services, 5922 Abernathy Drive, Los Angeles 45, California.

A series of forty-one 36-44 minute discussions by educators on a variety of topics, all more or less applicable to teacher education programs. The following titles are particularly applicable to the material discussed in Part III of this volume:

Order Number

203. *Part I—Creating the Emotional Environment for Learning*, Kimball Wiles.
- Part II—Creating the Intellectual Environment for Learning*, Kimball Wiles.
208. *Teacher-Pupil Planning Techniques*, Harry H. Giles.
210. *The Improvement of Teaching Through Audio-Visual Materials*, Edgar Dale and James D. Finn.
212. *The Use of Group Dynamics in Classroom Teaching*, Willard B. Spalding.
214. *Guidance in Modern Schools*, Shirley A. Hamrin.
220. *Principles on Teaching and Learning of the Secondary School Level*, Hugh M. Shafer.
222. *The Teacher and Public Relations*, Irving R. Melbo.
224. *Let Us Make a Study of Study (Effective Study Habits)*, William H. Burton.

**LAURA ZIRBES RECORDINGS ON TEACHING AND LEARNING.** 22 tapes, varying from 8-24 min., recorded at 7.5 ips, single track. Teaching Aids Laboratory, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

Child Development (4 tapes), Creative Teaching for Creative Thinking and Living (3 tapes), The Curriculum (6 tapes), Guidance (4 tapes), Language Arts (2 tapes), Teacher Education (3 tapes).

# IV

## *Working Together for Curriculum Improvement*



RESOURCE UNIT DEVELOPMENT: PRINCIPLES,  
PROCEDURES, AND ILLUSTRATIONS



A PROGRAM FOR IMPROVING THE CURRICULUM:  
PRINCIPLES, PROCEDURES, AND ACTIVITIES

*Resource Unit Development: principles,  
procedures, and illustrations*



IT WAS POINTED out in Chapter IX that the emerging concept of general method calls for an abandonment of the daily-ground-to-be-covered method of organizing classroom activities and the substitution of some form of unit organization. The learning unit was held to be the most promising approach to the reorganization of classroom teaching. Such units have three general characteristics. They consist of (1) a broad comprehensive problem or related problems or projects, (2) a series of related activities to provide common learnings for the group as a whole and individual learnings in terms of the specific problems, needs, and interests of students, and (3) evaluation materials for determining the outcomes of the work in terms of behavior changes in students. In modern practice, as illustrated in the previous chapter, such learning units are planned and carried out cooperatively by the teacher and his group of students. They cannot therefore be thought of as part of preplanning. *They cannot be developed in advance of teaching.* They are descriptions of what happens when a teacher and a group of students engage in a cooperative learning enterprise. Consequently, learning units should not be regarded as lesson or unit plans.

One reason why high school teachers have, by and large, failed to work democratically and creatively with groups of students in terms of cooperatively planned units of work is that conventional materials such as prescribed courses of study and adopted textbooks are not well adapted to creative teaching. Such materials give direction to the work of the classroom and provide the teacher with ready-made plans for teach-



Klohr calls attention to the significant fact that this course of study possessed a flexibility hitherto unknown. He supports his point by the following quotation from the bulletin:

This course of study makes the following important provisions: it indicates the direction in which the growth of boys and girls should proceed; it outlines the area of work for each; it gives suggestive raw materials of instruction . . . arranged to facilitate ready reference. The teacher should use them as the editor uses encyclopedias and as the engineer uses manuals and tools. This concept of the course of study as a *source book* developed for the purpose of aiding teachers in planning and executing their work is fundamental to effective use of the material.<sup>6</sup>

In 1938 the Rocky Mountain Workshop, held under the auspices of the Commission on the Relation of School and College of the Progressive Education Association, gave considerable attention to the development of "source" units which were intended for use in the schools represented by the teachers in the core area. They were developed by teachers representing the various subject-matter fields. Some of the titles suggest the nature of the enterprise: *Living in the Home*; *How Man Is Changing His Environment and Adapting Himself to New Conditions*; *Propaganda*; *Communication*; *Use of Leisure Time*; *Orientation to the New School*.<sup>7</sup>

Since 1938 there have been a number of noteworthy attempts to develop resource units in various fields, principally in social studies. In some of them, the line between a resource unit and a learning unit is not sharply drawn, with the result that they provide a definite pattern of teaching. In others, the teacher is left to his own initiative in deciding how he shall use the material of the resource unit.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Council for the Social Studies have pioneered a type of resource unit organization which possesses certain similarities to the unit plans of Morrison, Thayer, and others and is now being promoted by the above organizations. These units were developed for use in the social-science area of the senior high school.

Among the more than thirty titles of the units, which are known as

<sup>6</sup> *Tentative Course of Study for the Core Curriculum of Virginia Schools, Grade VIII*. Richmond, State Board of Education, 1934, pp. 37-38. (Italics added).

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the "Problems in American Life Series," are the following: (1) How Our Government Raises and Spends Money, (2) American Youth Faces the Future, (3) Man and His Machines, (4) Economic Problems of the Post-War World, (5) Public Opinion in War and Peace, (6) International Organization After the War, (7) War: The Causes, Effects, and Control of International Violence.

The units have a twofold purpose: (1) to provide the teacher with authentic and up-to-date information on a given unit, and (2) to suggest appropriate procedures for teaching and evaluating the unit. The first purpose is achieved by a carefully prepared statement by an expert in the field, the second, by a suggested plan of teaching prepared by a "master teacher." It is this second phase that reveals the various steps in the development of the learning unit. These units are published in pamphlet form and are distributed on a nation-wide basis.

In contrast with the resource units discussed above, most of those in current use have been developed for a specific situation such as a county or city school system. They are usually published in mimeograph form, sometimes with flexible binding, and are distributed locally.\*

### SOME GENERAL CRITERIA FOR RESOURCE-UNIT CONSTRUCTION

1. *Resource units are of value in all situations involving flexibility of content and teaching-learning procedures.* Resource units have probably been most widely used in core-program development. This is due to the fact that such programs call for new organizations of material which draw freely from many subject fields. The textbook in such cases becomes wholly inadequate. Rigid schemes of scope and sequence give way to a flexible approach which calls for the marshaling of a wide variety of resources upon short notice, in response to classroom decisions arrived at cooperatively.

It must be emphasized, however, that the core program has no monopoly on the problems approach, student participation in planning, or

\*Two good examples, among many that might be cited of such locally developed resource materials are: A complete series of resource units for "Unified Studies" developed for grades seven, eight, and nine (for titles see pp. 214-215). Merriam, Kansas, Shawnee-Mission District High Schools, 1959. (Mimeographed); A series of "Secondary Curriculum Guides" in each of the subject fields, usually covering the work of three grades. Findlay, Ohio, Hancock County Public Schools, 1958. (Mimeographed).

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any other psychologically sound teaching procedure. Therefore, it follows that the development of resource units is entirely appropriate in any learning situation in which the teacher has broken the bonds of tradition and needs help in discovering and utilizing a wide variety of resources. They have been utilized quite widely in social studies, science, industrial arts,<sup>9</sup> home economics, and physical education.

While resource units and guides are increasing in popularity, it must be admitted that they are still not in general use. However, with the rather phenomenal growth of block-time classes it is likely that their use will increase, since this type of organization encourages teachers to utilize a wide variety of resources.

2. *Resource units are best developed by a group of teachers rather than by one teacher.* This criterion does not mean merely that a number of people can produce a better product than one person can. It has been pointed out repeatedly that one justification for the use of the resource-unit technique is that it provides a means of escape from the traditional conception of teaching by breaking down the compartmentalized conception of subject matter. It follows then that the personnel of the staff most likely to understand the contributions which a field might make to a given problem area would produce a richer, more meaningful resource unit than would any one teacher, however broadly trained that teacher might be. This may be illustrated by an example taken from a cooperative project in which a number of specialists working together in a seminar under the direction of one of the authors sought to discover the contributions which their respective field might make to a unit on Problems of Self-Understanding. All agreed that the following activity might be carried out profitably by a class in a core program:

Prepare lists of clothes that pupils have bought recently or will buy soon. Consider problems involved in buying clothes (color, style, use, fit) and present a style show after visiting local merchants, making purchases, and getting ideas on what to present in the show.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See *Resource Units for Industrial Arts in Wisconsin Schools*, Curriculum Bulletin 19, Industrial Arts 2, Madison State Department of Public Instruction, 1951; Edward A. Krug, *Curriculum Planning*, Revised Edition, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1957, Chapter VIII.

<sup>10</sup> Harold Alberty, and others, *Utilizing Subject Fields in High-School Core Program Development* (Mimeographed), Columbus, The Ohio State University, 1950, p. 30.

## SCIENCE:

1. Study of source and chemical nature of natural synthetic fibers.
2. Relation of different kinds of cloth and methods of weaving.
3. Chemical tests for cloth.

## SOCIAL STUDIES:

1. Study consideration of buying clothing as it relates to family income and expenditures: e.g., consider this statement by a twelve-year-old in a family budget meeting: "The one thing this family needs most is a new permanent for mother. My new sport clothes can come later."<sup>11</sup>

While there is undoubtedly room for disagreement upon the appropriateness of some or all of these contributions, there will probably be general agreement upon the proposition that no one teacher would have been sensitive to many of the contributions suggested. Even where resource units are developed *within* a given subject field, teachers representing different fields of specialization can offer suggestions for enrichment.

It is fairly common practice in schools that have carried on workshops in resource-unit development to work in teams of five or six teachers representing the major fields of knowledge. Even interested laymen and students may be brought into such groups.

This is not to claim that *one* teacher may not improve his program by developing resource units. Many excellent units have been so developed.

3. *Resource units are likely to be most effective when they are used by the group that prepares them.* Some resource units have been prepared on a national scale by experts. The *Problems in American Life* series, prepared by the National Council for the Social Studies and the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, is an example. Such units are of value and their development should be encouraged. It is true, nevertheless, that the teachers who participate directly or indirectly in the development of resource units tend to use them more extensively and effectively. Klover points out this fact in his doctoral study of the resource unit. Among his conclusions is the following statement:

Five factors tend to contribute to the effectiveness with which resource units are used in the selected schools: (1) the organization and content of

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.



Courtesy, Dade County Public Schools Photo by F. Edgar Lane

Discovering and organizing appropriate resources is a serious problem once teachers have been emancipated from the ground-to-be-covered conception of teaching.

A group of staff members of the Kinkaid Park Junior High School (Dade County, Florida) are working together in the resource center of the school.

resource unit developed for possible use in a core program or in the social science or language-arts areas by one of the authors and a group of graduate students at The Ohio State University.<sup>13</sup>

#### *I. Philosophy and purposes. The philosophy and purposes of the*

<sup>13</sup> Harold Alberty, and others, *Helping Teenagers Explore Values*, Columbus, Ohio. The Ohio State University, 1956. Note: The following students participated in the development of this unit: Raymond Bridges, Evelyn Cummins, John Giesy, Earl Harmer, William Maize, Jean Marani, Raymond Palmer, Eugene Raddant, and Louis Schuster. These students, all teachers of wide experience, represented the following fields: core, social science, science, agriculture, language arts, and business education. Because of lack of space, the various sections have been greatly condensed but it is hoped that the abbreviated form will preserve the flavor of the monograph and provide good illustrations of the various sections.

*resource unit should be clearly stated.* If it is being developed for use in a particular school, the unit should, of course, reflect the basic philosophy and purposes which give direction to the school program. If the school has not developed a statement of its basic philosophy and purposes, the purposes stated in the resource unit should represent the highest level of agreement among the members of the group preparing it.

The following are the objectives of the resource unit which we are utilizing to illustrate the various sections of a resource unit.

1. To help students identify and clarify the values they hold.
2. To help students determine the sources of their basic values.
3. To help students understand the role of values in directing their lives.
4. To help students determine the consequences of acting upon their values.
5. To help students develop an ability and desire to appraise their values.
6. To help students examine critically their method of acquiring and changing values.
7. To help students become aware of the impact of the conflicting value systems on their lives.
8. To help students develop an open-minded attitude toward those who hold different values.
9. To help students develop a workable and consistent philosophy of life.<sup>14</sup>

II. *The Scope.* The resource unit should contain a statement of the scope, i.e., the limits of the problem area included and the basic content in the form of concepts, issues, or problems. The purpose is to provide the teacher who uses the unit with help in understanding the possible aspects of the area which might be dealt with in the classroom. In short, it is a way of "briefing" the teacher on the possibilities and appropriateness of the area for the development of a teaching-learning unit for a particular class.

There seems to be no common pattern in current practice for the content of this section of a resource unit. For the most part, statements of scope are very brief, consisting of bare outlines of content or lists of problems involved in the area. In contrast is the scope of the unit which we are using as an illustration. This statement is a rather exhaustive analysis of the problem of values in our culture. However, only the

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-3, *passim*.



introductory statement and the outline of the areas covered in the scope are presented here.

### *A. The Nature and Interpretation of Values and Value Systems.*

#### **1. What Are Values?**

In a very real sense the values of an individual represent his unique standards, his attitudes toward behavior, and are the expressions of what he prizes in life. Because values are individualized, though many of them are derived from the commonality of experience native to any group living in a societal structure, they are, nevertheless, expressions of selfhood. Every facet of human behavior is pervaded by value judgments and acts of valuing. And yet, values are not always clearly apprehended by the individual or by society; often they cannot be sharply delineated as to source, process of acquisition and change, and worth. The fact that many people cannot articulate their values clearly or have not fashioned them into a consistent value system does not minimize their role as directives in experience. It seems necessary for the individual to comprehend the nature of his values if he is to progress toward responsible adulthood and increase in a maturing understanding of himself and his fellow men. For this reason the school must address itself to helping students become conscious of values and their influence in daily living.

For the purposes of this resource unit, "A value is, defined roughly, a 'good,' an object or quality or idea that one esteems highly, and that, in the conduct of living, one would prefer to other things as 'worthy' to be achieved."<sup>15</sup> A value then, is a motivating force, a selecting factor, and an appraising concept which enables us to make choices among alternative paths of action. Values are decisive agents in formulating hypotheses and judging consequences.

#### **2. Value Systems**

#### **3. Conflicting Value Systems**

#### **4. Philosophical Value Systems**

##### **a. Idealism**

##### **b. Realism**

##### **c. Experimentalism**

##### **d. Reconstructionism**

##### **e. Eclecticism**

#### **5. Democracy as a Value System**

### *B. The Sources of Values*

#### **1. The Individual and His Culture**

#### **2. Religious Authority**

#### **3. Secular Authority**

<sup>15</sup> Joseph Justman, *Theories of Secondary Education in the United States*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1940, p. 11.

4. Superstitions, Customs and Beliefs
5. Personal Experiences
6. The Democratic Culture

C. *The Aspects of Living in Which Values Find Expression*

1. Personal Living
2. Immediate Personal-Social Relationships
3. Social-Civic Relationships
4. Economic Relationships
5. Moral, Ethical, and Religious Relationships
6. Aesthetic Relationships

D. *How Values and Value Systems Are Changed*

1. Through Inculcation of Someone in Authority
2. Through Physiological Drives
3. Through Emotional Experiences
4. Through Concrete Rewards and Punishment
5. Through Love and Approval
6. Through Reflective Thinking
7. Through Cultural Conditioning
8. The Psychology of Changing Value Systems

E. *How Behavior is Evaluated*

1. Standards of Behavior Set by the Culture
2. Standards of Behavior Determined by Reflective Thinking

F. *Professional Bibliography*

The following bibliography of professional books is for the teachers use in further understanding the scope of this resource unit. The asterisks are indications of the reviewer's opinion of the value of each book. Three asterisks indicate an excellent rating, two asterisks, very valuable; and one asterisk, good. The bibliography is not exhaustive but should provide sufficient background material to aid the teacher in developing various learning units with students. The books marked with an "S" are also recommended for students.

Bettelheim, Bruno, *Overcoming Prejudice*, Chicago, Science Research Associates, Inc., 1953.

T\*\*\*This is a pamphlet of the Better Living Series. Written especially for S\*\*\*parents and teachers but might reasonably be used with high school students. Gives hints as to how teachers and parents can help prevent prejudice from taking root, and deal with it when it does exist.

Cantril, Hadley, *The "Why" of Man's Experience*, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1950.

T\*Chapter 2, "The Characteristics of Man" is a discussion of an outstanding characteristic of man which is to sense value attributes in

new experience and to recognize that they are unique for each individual.

Hunt, Maurice P., and Metcalf, Lawrence E., *Teaching High School Social Studies*. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1955.

T\*\*\*Authors give background information on the conflicts in our culture . . .<sup>16</sup>

III. *Suggested Student Activities.* *A wealth of carefully selected group and individual learning activities, organized for effective use, is an indispensable part of a resource unit.*

All of the possible student activities obviously cannot be included in a resource unit since many of them will develop as the teacher and students plan the learning unit. The activities should cover a wide range of types, such as creative and constructive activities, forum and round-table discussions, role playing, psycho- and socio-drama, class plays, painting, modeling, seeing movies, listening to recordings, taking trips, parties, forming social, economic, and political organizations, and the like.

Factual and mere discussion questions have little place in a resource unit. They are products of the daily-ground-to-be-covered procedure all too familiar in American education.

Formulating, stating, and organizing suitable activities is one of the most difficult tasks of the resource-unit builder. The use of the unit will probably depend upon how well this part is carried out.

Needless to say, activities should contribute to the realization of the objectives set forth in the unit; be sufficiently diversified to provide for a wide variety of individual differences among students; be comprehensive, and so clearly stated that the teacher and students utilizing them can readily grasp their meaning and implications. Since this section of a resource unit is one of the most valuable and difficult to construct, we are including the entire section on suggested activities from the resource unit on *Helping Teenagers Explore Values*. It will be noted that the activities are organized in terms of the "aspects of living" developed in the scope.

#### A. *Personal Living*

This area denotes the kinds of experiences which an individual has as a

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 28-33, passim. These are three typical samples of references. The unit contains 34 annotated references.

result of interaction with the immediate environment of home and family. Personal values are expressions of selfhood and personality.

1. Make a list of the values you think you accept and use in guiding your everyday living. Keep a record of your actions for a few days to see if you really act in terms of these values. You might have your parents and friends keep a similar record regarding you.

2. Write a description of an important decision you have made recently. Try to recall the values you hold which influenced your decision. What seem to be the origins of these values? Examples: keeping something you found or trying to locate the owner; cheating or not cheating; going or not going to a certain place; reporting or ignoring violations of school rules by your classmates.

3. Make a list of the problems about which you and your parents sometimes disagree. Arrange these problems in three groups:

- a. Problems you feel you should be permitted to settle yourself.
- b. Problems parents should settle for you.
- c. Problems that require family discussion and agreement.

Discuss these with your parents. How do these kinds of decisions relate to your personal values?

4. List ways by which you can be tactful in refusing to do things not in accord with your values. For example, smoking, drinking, staying out late, etc. Use this list as a basis for a panel discussion in class.

5. Conduct a panel discussion composed of parents and students to arrive at what parents expect of their children and what children expect of their parents in relation to dating, drinking, smoking, number and frequency of dates, time to be home from dates, appropriate places for young people to go, amount of time to be devoted to study, and others.

6. We do not often question the sources of our tastes in food, clothing, and habits of grooming. Select one of these areas and survey the class to determine their preferences and the sources of these preferences. Present your findings to the class after you have classified the answers under such headings as: home, other teenagers, magazines, movies, etc. In your discussion attempt to have your classmates decide if their preferences are the result of clear thinking or just acceptance of what others do.

7. You and your classmates might develop a list of issues or beliefs about which there exist conflicts in the area of personal living. At the beginning of the unit write a short paper discussing your beliefs about these questions. For example:

- a. Attitudes toward minority groups.
- b. Attitudes toward teenage patterns of behavior.
- c. Attitudes toward different behavioral standards which parents require of adolescents.

At the end of the unit state your attitudes on the same issues. Do you have any keener insights into the sources of values supporting your opinions? Why?

8. Make a display board illustrating the conflicting values which you and your parents hold. Examples might be the use of the telephone, dating problems, what to wear, etc. Make these conflicts the basis for class discussion.

9. Think of the person in your life whom you most admire. How has he met his problems? Compare his values of cooperation, tolerance, and self-reliance with those you hold. Are there any similarities? Any differences? If there are similarities, have you accepted these values because of the person or have you thought them through for yourself?

10. Survey the literature available in your home library or some other library to which you have access for materials pertaining to values which are of interest to you or might be of interest to the class. Make accurate notations on your readings so that they will be helpful to you in making contributions to class discussion.

11. Make a collection of poems, short stories, novels, TV programs, etc., especially liked by various members of the school staff. Include reasons for their preferences. Present the material to the group. Have the group try to determine any relationships between occupation and preference in selections. Do the selections indicate any relationship between values and occupations in which people engage?

12. Keep an account of the money you spend over a period of time for amusements and entertainments or recreation. Figure the percentage of allowance spent for amusement or recreation. Make estimates on a yearly basis. Follow this with a panel discussion on "How to Have Fun on Your Own" to show that recreation need not be expensive or elaborate.

13. Organize a parent-teacher-student council to determine types of social functions to be approved for school children, time of terminating functions, time for returning home, approved places for holding student social functions, etc.

14. Conduct a school-wide survey on the following: assuming you are a person with the necessary qualifications and ability, and that the salary in each of the following occupations is the same, would you choose to be a mathematician, sales manager, clergyman, or politician? After choices have been made, ask the person to state briefly why he made the choice he did. Tabulate the results to see if there is any significant relationship between values and choice of occupation.

15. Make a diary of one, two, or several days activities. If all identifying material is removed, these may be used for class discussion in comparing and contrasting the various value judgments expressed in the diaries (such as reading the comics, watching television, attending the movies, helping around the house, etc.).

16. Play the game, *If I Had One Wish in the World, I Would Wish for* ——. Justify your wish on the basis of your value system.

17. Keep a record of the jobs you perform in the home such as washing dishes, cleaning, washing the family car, etc. Tabulate these for all members

of the class and use the results as the basis for a panel, debate, or discussion to show the value judgments involved.

18. Ask the question of a good sampling of your high-school friends, "Whom would you rather have for a best friend: professional football player, lawyer, doctor, actress, judge, or others?" Ask the same question of "the man on the street." Is there any relationship between the two sets of preferences? Do the results indicate that values change with maturity? Suggest hypotheses for any consistent differences between the choices of the two groups.

19. Adolescents often complain that their parents' ideas of conduct do not fit the times. Arrange a panel discussion involving students and their parents to discuss whether conduct is a value pattern that must not change or whether it is a pattern that must be readjusted to conform to changing conditions in society.

20. Select a value judgment such as: "Always tell the truth," and present to the class reasons for accepting, rejecting, or modifying the generalization. What do you conclude about the applicability of such generalizations for guiding behavior?

21. Select a period of history and find out the patterns of conduct followed by teenagers at that time. Compare these patterns with standards of teenagers today. Present a talk to the class in which you report your findings. Through class discussion endeavor to discover the reasons why these patterns of conduct have changed.

22. Make a list of the magazines and newspapers taken in your home as well as the types of books in your home library. Analyze the values which seem to underlie the selection of these materials. Compare your results with those of your classmates. Through class discussion try to discover the influence these materials may have had on value formation.

23. Observe several television shows with the aim of determining why they are or are not popular. How do the values one holds determine the shows he prefers? To what extent do the shows you observed coincide with the value system of the general public?

24. Produce a short play in which a choice must be made between equally strong values. For example, a father has no money to buy food or medicine for a sick child; he is too proud to ask for charity and steals to get the needed supplies. How do values operate in situations where we have to choose between such alternatives?

25. During an information discussion or "bull session" with your friends, try to make a tabulation of the various topics of conversation. Present the results to the class for comment. What values are reflected in the conversations?

26. Write and produce a short play depicting a family whose members fail to cooperate, fail to be loyal to each other, or fail to show affection. Be sure to include incidents that would be apt to happen to members of a family in which youngsters are the age of pupils in the class.

27. Write and produce a short play demonstrating the opposite of the above activity, i.e., a family that cooperates, etc.

#### *B. Immediate Personal-Social Relationships*

This area denotes the kinds of experiences which an individual has as he assumes responsibilities and acquires status in the community thus coming in contact with adults and peers outside the family group. Values developed through these kinds of interactions make up the socialization process accompanying growth.

28. Choose several specific values and keep a scrapbook of articles, news reports, editorials, cartoons, pictures, etc., selecting for inclusion items which show the various applications of these values in everyday living. It may be of particular interest to include items which show conflicts among the values you have selected. It is suggested that you write short comments of your reactions to these value-conflicts.

29. In the classroom a frequent problem is behavior. Students have views about ways in which these behavioral problems should be handled. Often these views are different from those of the teacher. Discuss this problem in class and formulate some ways in which these differences can be resolved. Try to determine upon what values these decisions were made.

30. Discuss with your family, relatives, friends, or acquaintances what values are important to them in their everyday life, and why they consider these values to be important. Prepare a report of the findings to be used as the basis for your contribution in class discussion. Can you determine from this study whether or not people know why they hold certain values?

31. In America we value cooperation, use of reflective thinking, appreciation for the opinions and rights of others, etc. Are there situations in the school or community in which these values are being overlooked? What can be done to make the values more functional?

32. You and your classmates might engage in some role playing involving values such as rudeness, lack of respect for other points of view, consideration of the worth of others, honesty, etc. Follow this with a discussion of the values which direct our behavior.

33. Obtain a large map of your locality and color recreation areas. Write a brief description of each area and its facilities. Conduct interviews with older residents to find out what facilities were available 50, 25, and 10 years ago. How has the community changed in the values it attaches to recreation?

34. Hold a forum on juvenile delinquency. Invite leaders in the field to meet with the class. In preparation for this meeting, the class might organize subgroups to survey books, periodicals, and the daily newspapers for the purpose of securing information on the problem. As a culminating activity the group might propose ways of dealing with this problem.

35. Develop a code or set of principles for conducting a school party or dance. Discuss the code with your parents to (a) discover differences in

viewpoint and (b) to get suggestions for improvement. The group might then revise the statement in light of the discussion following the conference with parents.

36. Organize a student study group to recommend suitable standards of dress for school and social functions. Some points to consider might be: should girls wear slacks and levis to class; should girls wear shorts or sun dresses to school; should boys wear ties to school; and where are Bermuda shorts appropriate?

37. Work with the class to determine the values which influence class behavior. How can your values help guide your social conduct more intelligently?

38. Conduct some role playing in which the parts of parents, teachers, students, etc. are portrayed. The problem situation should represent a problem causing concern to the class. Do you now have any clearer insights into making better value judgments?

39. Collect clippings concerning sporting events to show the values spectators and players attach to such contests. For example, accounts of subsidizing athletes, disputes about infringements of the rules, etc. Discuss the apparent values involved in our attitudes toward such happenings. Are these attitudes wise? Why?

40. Organize a committee of parents, teachers, students, and school administrators to investigate the pros and cons of secondary-school fraternities. What values are involved in belonging or not belonging to a fraternity?

41. Select several foreign countries which preliminary research indicates have segregation problems (the Union of South Africa, etc.). By correspondence with students in these countries try to determine their attitude toward the problem. Are their attitudes different from yours? What values seem to influence the foreign students and you?

42. Try to pick out incidents in which people "cheat" in the cafeteria line. Interview or question a good sample of students regarding their reactions to these incidents and attempt to get judgments regarding their attitudes toward people who do these things. What values seem to influence the responses? What conclusions can you draw from the results of the interviews?

43. For girls. Conduct a survey among your friends to secure comments on this question: In choosing a husband would you prefer a man who:

- a. Is successful in his profession and commands the admiration of others
- b. Likes to help other people
- c. Is fundamentally spiritual in his attitude toward life
- d. Is gifted along artistic lines

Obtain a brief statement as to why each girl made the selection she did. Tabulate the results and try to analyze the values behind the answers.



44. Critically examine the student council regulations to determine the values held by that body in terms of the regulations they have proposed. Use the results as a basis for class discussion and point out any conflicts or inconsistencies. Ask the class representative to bring these to the attention of the council.

45. Take a large photograph, or enough small ones for each class member, of a typical social situation. Present the picture to the class. Have the class or each individual make up a story describing what has gone on in the situation prior to the taking of the picture, what is taking place in the picture, and what possible future activity will take place. Exchange the stories among the class members and have them list the values which seem to underlie the stories. How do individual values influence our interpretation of a social situation.

46. Present a short skit in class showing proper etiquette in a few common social situations such as treatment of ladies, table manners, respect for elders, asking a girl for a date, filling one's dance program, etc. How does an individual acquire acceptable social patterns?

47. Group actions many times influence values held by individuals. Analyze yourself or some other person who was influenced by group action and attempt to determine what factors were at work during this action. Examples might include student strikes, booing at athletic contests, and student demonstrations.

48. Conduct a survey of several moving pictures shown in your home town; select a variety of types such as drama, comedy, adventure, documentary, etc. Determine the percentages of boys and girls, teenagers, and adults who attend. Bring these data to class for discussion regarding value choices as indicated by the findings.

49. Analyze the reasons given for inclusion in the curriculum of various activities and courses of study. Attempt to state the values behind the inclusion of these activities and courses. Compare the statements of parents, school officials, teachers, and students. Are there differences? Why?

50. Make a study of the values commonly expressed in the movies, on television, or in the local newspaper in regard to some phase of teenage behavior. How do the above media of communication and entertainment affect our value system? To what extent can they be relied upon to exemplify values? Is this good or bad?

51. Prepare a radio or television script dealing with the problem of the conflicting values of the younger and older generations. Present the finished program at a school assembly or over an educational radio station or television channel.

### *C. Social-Civic Relationships*

This area brings the individual into sharp interaction with the culture and the institutions which society has evolved to handle the complexities of modern life. These experiences differ from those in the preceding areas

since here the relationships are highly organized and often impersonal and lacking in face-to-face contacts.

52. Make a study of various cultures to gain information regarding the value systems of these cultures. Such sources as the *National Geographic*, *Life*, books by anthropologists such as Margaret Mead, members of the community who have traveled widely, documentary films, etc. may prove helpful. What factors are most influential in value development?

53. Each section of this country has been influenced by the value patterns of the original settlers and the more recent immigrants. Through readings in history attempt to find the values of these two groups which have either been retained in whole or in part in the local area. These findings could be the basis for an article in the school or local newspaper.

54. Test the following beliefs for validity through group or individual research:

- a. The essential differences among races reside in differences in the quality and composition of the blood.
- b. The Caucasian (or any other) race is superior to all other races.
- c. The Anglo-Saxon stock is superior to all other groups.
- d. If white-skinned people marry black-skinned people, all of their children will be black-skinned.
- e. Certain races are naturally gifted in areas such as music, art, the dance, etc.

55. Make a collection of several political speeches of a candidate seeking public office (either from current affairs or from historical references). Analyze these speeches for consistency of point of view. Is there any relationship between what is said and the locale of the speech? Attempt to analyze the factors which influence what a candidate says as he talks to the voters.

56. Choose a famous individual in history and attempt to discover the values of this individual as exemplified by his actions. Were the individual's values in harmony with values commonly accepted during his time or were they in opposition to those values? Can an individual become famous by having values in opposition to those commonly accepted by the majority of society?

57. Discuss the effects of confusion in the value system in America upon personality, social structure, and national unity with the aim of pointing up the need for consistency in systems of values. For example, accepting members of minority groups verbally and rejecting them in action; rejecting stealing but not reporting errors in change or errors in bills.

58. Formulate a questionnaire that would be designed to indicate the values held by the community regarding its attitude toward politics, adolescents, business practices, etc. Circulate the questionnaire, tabulate the results, and take the completed study back to the class and the community.

59. Investigate the various social classes that exist in the local com-

munity with the aim of determining what are the differences in values held by each class. Use census materials or other community studies to determine the classes of people. Ask questions to get the reactions of people to such conflicts as labor relations, politics, segregation, etc.

60. Outline and discuss the major values of American democracy. Compare these values with those of other ideologies. What are the implications of these differences when one considers a world government, the United Nations, the Atlantic Pact, etc.?

61. Discuss the sociological factors disturbing the value system in America. Consider such factors as the decline of community life, closely knit family groups, the impact of modern communication and transportation, social mobility, economic levels, etc.

62. Conduct a survey of local hotels and restaurants to determine their attitude and policy toward racial and minority groups, paying particular attention to such policies as raising the prices without notice, rendering poor service, segregating dining rooms, etc. Suggest reasons for the practices discovered. Attempt to trace the origin of these practices. Are they consistent with community feelings?

63. Adolescents often feel that adults do not want them to participate in community affairs. A group of students might contact civic leaders to determine the kinds of activities in which teenagers can participate, and also the reasons why they are not permitted to participate in some activities. The results of this survey would give material for class discussion or perhaps an assembly program.

64. Our national leaders repeatedly emphasize that democratic values underlie our way of life. Collect material from speeches and other public addresses. Analyze the material for contradictions, similarities, patterns in relation to democratic values and action. The results of this study could be given in a panel on "Concepts of Democratic Values."

65. Values change. Test the validity of this statement by selecting a democratic value such as freedom of speech and find supporting or contradictory evidence from historical accounts. Report to the class and ask students to consider this question: "Why do some values remain constant and others change?"

66. Carry on group reading or discussion of some state, county, or city law and attempt to determine the values justifying these laws. Try to locate points at which individual and group values seem to conflict.

67. Select several novels which describe the treatment accorded individuals representing minority groups. Are these people accepted or rejected on the basis of what they do, their origin, and where they live? What values motivate the way we react to these people?

68. Develop hypotheses as to why citizens of a community tolerate slum areas. What values are being expressed when community groups seek to eliminate slums?

69. Does the community value wholesome recreation for children and/or youth? Survey the facilities provided by the community and various civic groups to determine the extent to which the value of recreation is being recognized. Perhaps the class might suggest further needs to appreciate civic and community groups. What are the primary differences between facilities provided by civic and community groups and those sponsored by commercial groups? Do different values motivate the different groups?

70. The United States has allied herself at one time or another with many different countries, especially those which did not at the time follow a democratic way of life (Russia and Italy in World War I, Russia in World War II, Yugoslavia in the Cold War). List such countries and determine through readings in history the reasons why we have valued friendship with these countries. Can we justify our actions?

71. Read about some war involving the United States as written by representatives of both sides. Explain the interpretations from both points of view. Why are the viewpoints so different? Is history as written by historians infallible? Is it always true to fact or do values held by the authors tend to color the historians' points of view?

72. Make a study of the changed values the government holds in providing for the needy, the unemployed, the aged, the blind, etc. Some suggested sources of information are history books, memoirs of government officials, magazines, government publications, laws, and court decisions. Formulate some hypotheses to explain these changed values and test them through your readings.

73. As a group project study the educational history of America to determine the changing values and purposes of the schools in this country. Present your findings to the class in a report on "Democracy and Educational Values."

74. Compare radio and television programs in the United States with those of England, Russia, or some other foreign countries. How do the commercials differ? What control does the government exercise? Do such controls affect values? How?

75. By individual readings and interviews with a lawyer, a committee could gather material to present to the class concerning the changing concepts of some section of the Constitution, for example, the 5th Amendment. The class might formulate an hypothesis to explain the changing concepts.

76. One often hears the statement, "Youth must be taught to think." In actual practice does the local community desire youth who can think for themselves? Collect evidence to support or contradict this statement. What value is involved?

77. Study the methods used by political parties to create favorable attitudes toward their policies and programs. What methods are most efficient? What methods, if any, are unethical? Propose a program for evaluating the claims of parties and candidates.

78. Make a list of the changes in public attitudes which have occurred during the past ten years concerning the following:

- a. Attitudes toward Germans
- b. Attitudes toward Japanese
- c. Attitudes toward Russians
- d. Attitudes toward Negroes.

Try to account for these changes by studying the way they were brought about.

79. Make a study of national or state legislation designed to benefit certain groups such as farmers, teachers, war veterans, widows, labor, industry, etc. What values appear to operate in determining this type of legislation?

80. Study the historical documents and related writing for some period in American history to determine the values held by those who determined the policy. Examples might be Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, or Franklin Roosevelt.

81. Follow the actions of some legislative body working on a controversial issue to determine the values which appear to be involved in their decisions.

82. Conduct a class discussion on:

- a. The separate but equal doctrine.
- b. The desegregation decision of the U. S. Supreme Court in 1954.

83. Interview members of the school board and find to what pressures they are subjected. Try to determine from what general areas of society most of these pressures emanate. Discuss the ethics of these pressures and/or pressure groups.

84. Many people are not satisfied unless they own the latest model cars, TV sets, expensive clothes, etc. What values motivate people to want "to keep up with the Joneses"? Do these values reflect mature thinking? Do they reflect peculiarities of our culture?

85. Hold a debate on the question—Society has the inalienable right to dictate certain codes and values to be held by everyone; or parents have the right to dictate modes of behavior for their children.

86. The Declaration of Independence is considered to be a noble statement of American values. Discuss in a theme your interpretation of what Jefferson meant by such concepts as "inalienable rights," "The right of revolution," etc. Compare these interpretations with comments of noted historians. Have we changed our views with the passing of time? Are the meanings and applications of these statements the same today as they were when made?

#### *D. Economic Relationships*

In this area the individual faces value choices involving his economic adjustment and his success in the achievement of adult status. The values of the economic system seem remote from the personal values of the individual; this characteristic increases the difficulties faced by the adolescent as he becomes a producer-consumer.

87. Collect a series of advertisements which were written to influence our social and economic values. Analyze the values which are expressed in each advertisement. How influential do you think these values are in our daily living?

88. In America some people claim all wholesome work is good and of equal value. Is this generalization evident in the ways in which various occupations are depicted in the movies, on TV, and in literature? Collect explanations for what you find and judge these on the basis of your own value judgments.

89. A tremendous problem confronting Americans in dealing with so-called "backward" areas revolves around the difficulties of giving these people technical know-how when their basic way of life is built on a value system different from ours. Collect material from current literature and periodicals which points out the conflicts between the values of the people of these "backward" countries and American principles. Give suggestions that might be used by Americans as they work with these "backward" or underdeveloped countries.

90. In the Middle Ages the primary concern of both serf and feudal lord was salvation of the soul. They expected life to be brief and filled with trials and tribulations. Today man is concerned with a happy, prosperous life in the present. How do you account for these changes in values?

91. Make a study of back issues of newspapers over a period of years to determine changes in attitudes of representatives of labor and management. How does one account for any differences noted? How do present day labor-management relations compare with those of previous times? What values seem important to these relations?

92. Collect evidence to show the average salary of a person who did not complete elementary school, one who completed high school, and another who received a college degree. What are the values involved? How do you account for the differences?

93. Conduct panel discussions in which the following statements are explored:

- a. Our government is becoming more and more socialistic regardless of the party in power.
- b. We can achieve greater efficiency through free enterprise.
- c. The cooperative movement would insure a better economic system than one based on competition.

94. Prepare a debate on the topic—Is it better to live in an economy in which wages and prices are high than one in which they are low?

95. Collect and present evidence to the class which bears upon the relationship between our technological advancements and efficiency in industry.

96. Through an examination of history texts, determine the attitude of various sections of our country toward high tariffs. Note the changes in attitude through the years. What values influenced these reverses? Follow this with a class discussion of this influence upon our economy. Similar studies

may be made of various governmental subsidies, such as crop supports, grants to airlines, and steamship companies.

#### *E. Moral, Ethical, and Religious Relationships*

This area of living involves the individual in value judgments in morals, ethics, and religion. The sanctions for such values come from home, church, community, and society. The force of morality binds men together and dictates the quality of their relationships; therefore, the need for clarification of values.

97. Many of our religious values are both strengthened and weakened by influences outside of the Church. Collect news items, advertisements, stories, speeches, episodes from daily living, etc., that illustrate this fact. After collecting these items attempt to answer the question, "Why do some influences outside the Church tend to strengthen religious values while others tend to weaken them?"

98. Many religious denominations have affirmed that racial segregation is contrary to the tenets of Christianity and yet no effort is made to integrate congregations. Gather information in the form of official church statements, news reports, editorials, speeches, etc., pertaining to this problem. Why is there such a discrepancy between stated tenets and actual practices? Some examples:

- a. Negroes and whites in the South
- b. Mexicans and Americans in the Southwest
- c. Indians and whites in the West
- d. Orientals and non-Orientals in the far West

99. Compile a list of the values inherent in your particular religion or denomination, and also those inherent in some other religion or denomination. Compare the two lists to determine similarities and/or differences. What are the implications of these for class or school personal relationships? Is there any way of determining which set of values is right and which wrong? Is there any necessity for considering some wrong and some right?

100. In many classrooms there will be students who may have lived in various sections of the country. Survey the class to discover what superstitions prevail in various areas of our land. (a) If there are any variations, try to discover reasons for them. (b) Look for scientific evidence to support or refute the superstitions. Discuss the results of both studies in class and try to trace the development of these superstitions.

101. Study the moral and ethical codes of the great religions of the world. Try to account for major differences through: (1) cultural diversity, (2) history, (3) personal leadership. Hold a forum on the problem of building one world in spite of diverse outlooks. Discuss this problem in connection with UN and UNESCO.

102. Study and compare the moral and/or ethical principles or codes of youth organizations such as:

- a. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts

may be made of various governmental subsidies, such as crop supports, grants to airlines, and steamship companies.

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- a. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts



- b. Campfire Girls
- c. YMCA and YWCA
- d. Youth groups in churches

103. Study the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes and the Golden Rule, with particular reference to applications today.

104. Study the problem of cheating during tests and examinations in the school. Under what circumstances does most of the cheating take place? How are values related to cheating? What are some possible means of lessening or getting rid of cheating in the classroom?

105. Conduct a debate on the question—Criteria should be set up for judging championship teams on the basis of sportsmanship as well as ability to win games.

106. Attempt to determine what factors have been responsible for the change in attitude in the United States regarding birth control, divorce, sterilization, and eugenics.

107. Conduct a survey of students, teachers, parents, and friends regarding their attitudes toward sex education in the high school. Compare the results with the attitude that prevailed twenty-five years ago. Point out the various factors influencing these differences.

108. When buying real estate the general feeling is "let the buyer beware." Leaky basement walls are covered with paint or furniture is positioned to hide the leaks. Smoky fireplaces are scrubbed and not used while the house is being shown; other practices are numerous. Present two short plays, one showing the above practices with the results, and the other showing the person who corrects the defects before putting the property on the market. Attempt to bring out the relationship between the person's values and his method of operation in the above.

109. There has been much publicity about athletes "shopping around" for a college where they can get the best "deal." Discuss their apparent value judgments and value systems and also some outcomes of these practices. Present the results to the local coach and invite him to discuss this problem with the class.

#### *F. Aesthetic Relationships*

In this area experiences involving taste and discrimination are found. The values of the individual stem from his personal reactions conditioned always by the efforts of others to alter them according to some external standard. Coupled with this conflict is the apparent class distinction attached to the aesthetic values of an individual.

110. Make a survey to determine the kinds of music your classmates enjoy and dislike. Ask them to tell why or how they developed this taste. What do you conclude about the factors which influence our musical likes and dislikes.

111. Church architecture often has religious meaning and symbolism. A small committee might visit representative churches in the community to

ascertain the relation of church design to the beliefs of the denomination represented. Present findings to the class by means of a panel dealing with "Religious Values in Architecture."

112. Take a trip through different parts of the local community to obtain examples of various types of architecture. The following questions could serve as a guide for information to be obtained:

- a. What particular buildings are pleasing to the eye? Why?
- b. What buildings do not appear pleasing to the eye? Why not?
- c. Do different sections of the community appear more pleasing than others? If so, why?
- d. How do the school buildings of the community compare with other buildings as to eye appeal?
- e. What are some of the characteristics of buildings that tend to make them appealing? What are some of the characteristics that tend to have the opposite effect? Report your findings to the class.

113. Trace the changes in values of the American public toward popular music over a period of years. Include the so-called jazz, Latin American rhythms, progressive jazz, rock and roll. Discuss the attitude toward works of the masters when they have been incorporated into popular songs. How do you account for these changes?

114. Visit an art gallery to study statues, paintings, and other works of art for the purpose of determining what makes "good" art.

115. Play recordings of classical music and popular music for the purpose of determining why each has a certain appeal. Why are some records valued as classics while others soon collect dust?

116. Conduct, in cooperation with an art gallery, a survey of high school students to try to determine their attendance at the gallery. Contrast the findings with the number of students enrolled in art work in the schools.

117. Ask the librarian's help in a project to determine what types of books and magazines are circulated most. Using the results of this survey, try to draw some conclusions as to what is valued most in respect to literary works in the school. Is this true in general for the entire community? Are there any apparent sex differences? This might be carried further and a survey made of the public library in the community.

118. A small committee might interview local architects to ascertain the most popular styles of homes they are asked to design, and the reason the architect designs a particular type of home for the locality. The committee should report its findings to the class and lead a discussion aimed at discovering the factors that influence the styles of homes found in the community.

### *Miscellaneous Activities*

The following activities are not readily classifiable because they relate to several aspects of living. The teacher should adapt these to his own situation as the need arises.

119. Make a study of the values commonly expressed in the movies, on television, or in local newspapers. How do the above media of communication and entertainment affect our value system?

120. Invite members, leaders, or representatives of various religious, civic, business and labor organizations of the community to speak to the class regarding values peculiar to their groups.

121. Through activities such as youth forums, making scrapbooks and posters, round-table discussions, talks by specialists in group guidance classes, an attempt might be made to clarify values in:

- a. Choice of occupations
- b. Family life
- c. Boy-girl relationships
- d. Personal problems such as sex, physical abilities, mental abilities, special abilities
- e. Use of alcohol, tobacco, and narcotics.
- f. Social adjustment

122. Assume responsibility for a school assembly program treating some phase of values. A short play dealing with honesty, truthfulness, cooperation, competition, etc., might be presented.

123. Prepare a series of statements covering beliefs in the following areas:

- a. Politics
- b. Religion
- c. Race
- d. Personal standards of morality

Study your particular list from the standpoint of (1) origin, (2) validation, and (3) value in living. The results might be tabulated and the conclusions used as a basis for a round-table discussion.

124. Correspond with students in other schools in order to compare values. Various approaches can be used such as questions regarding school and classroom behavior, school-club rules and regulations, dating policies and procedures in different communities, etc.<sup>17</sup>

*IV. Bibliography and Teaching Aids. Every resource unit should include a wide variety of reference materials and other teaching aids with annotations, organized for effective use.* Studies show that this section of a resource unit is one of the most valued by teachers. It is therefore important that it be carefully and accurately developed. A large miscellaneous body of reference material is of little use to the teacher. References which fail to list publishers and dates are not procurable, and without annotations the teacher has no way of determining their applicability to the unit under consideration.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 34-48.

This section should contain (1) books, (2) pamphlets, (3) periodicals, (4) films, (5) film strips, (6) slides, (7) pictures, (8) recordings, (9) maps, (10) charts, (11) models, and the like.

The unit on values which we are using for illustration separates books from audio-visual materials. The section on books lists nearly a hundred titles. Under audio-visual are listed 37 films. Each book is evaluated by the use of asterisks as in the professional bibliography listings.

A few books and audio-visual materials are listed herewith in order to indicate the procedure used by the group.

### BOOKS

Douglas, William, *Strange Lands and Friendly People*, New York, Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1951.

S\*\* On-the-scene version of what happens to primitive cultures when democracy and communism clash. Suggestions for a foreign policy to combat communism.

McCloskey, Gordon E., *Understanding Our Economy*, Chicago, Science Research Associates, Inc., 1954.

S\*\* A pamphlet of the Life Adjustment Series on how the economic system supplies our needs. Chapter headings include: "Equal Opportunity For All," "A Look at the Foundation," "What Do We Need and Want?," "Do We Have Enough Resources?," "How We Produce and Exchange Goods and Services," "The Proof of the Pudding," and "Where Do You Fit In?"

Warner, W. Lloyd and Warner, Mildred Hall, *What You Should Know About Social Class*, Chicago, Science Research Associates, Inc., 1953.

S\*\* A pamphlet of the Life Adjustment Series which is intended to help the teenager learn about the different social classes and understand just how this business of social classes affects each one now, and how it will affect them in the future.

### FILMS

BY JUPITER. 27 min., Sd., B&W—\$125, J.S., Wilding Picture Productions, Inc., 1934 Argyle St., Chicago 40, Ill., 1947.

Approaches the universal problem of improving the attitude of man toward man. It reveals the everyday experiences of an ordinary man who learns how to become "wisely selfish" through a miracle worked by a benign Jupiter and his wife, June.

CAN WE IMMUNIZE AGAINST PREJUDICE? 7 min., Sd., B&W—\$40, T., Columbia University Press, Center for Mass Communication, 413 W. 117th St., New York 27, N. Y., 1954.

*Demonstrates how three sets of parents try to immunize their children against prejudice, by three different methods.*

**HOW HONEST ARE YOU?** 14 min., Sd., B&W—\$62.50, Color—\$125, J.S., Coronet Films, Coronet Bldg., Chicago 1, Ill., 1950.

Students do not have much trouble in understanding honesty is a good thing, especially simple honesty. In some situations honesty is a much deeper problem and it is this type of situation that is analyzed. One may draw certain conclusions about what honesty is and how a person may apply the test of honesty to his thoughts and actions.

**OF HUMAN RIGHTS.** 20 min., Sd., B&W—Rent—\$4, J.S., Films and Visual Education Division, United Nations, New York, N. Y., 1950.

An incident involving economic and racial prejudice among children is used to dramatize the importance of bringing to the attention of the people of the world their rights as human beings.<sup>18</sup>

*V. Evaluation. Evaluation procedures and instruments selected in terms of the stated objectives should be included as integral parts of the resource unit.* This aspect of resource-unit development is probably the one most neglected. Many units fail to deal with the problem at all. The concept, procedures, and instruments of evaluation should be consistent with the philosophy of education on which the unit is built. Some conceive of evaluation as measurement of learning and are interested in end products only; others may bring evaluation into the planning of the unit in terms of evaluating growth in the light of certain objectives but also are interested in end products; still others are interested in the measurement of changed behavior but do not consider the methods used to gain that behavior; while others think of evaluating as a continuous process which is an integral part of the learning-teaching situation. The methods, instruments, and use of the data will vary in terms of one's concept of evaluation.

If one accepts the viewpoint that evaluation is continuous, it will be thought of as being an attempt to get insights into the values which teachers and students hold in the educational program and to secure evidence as to whether those values are being applied in their relationship to each other. It begins when planning for the unit begins, is continuous throughout the unit, and must be considered an integral part of the learning unit. The evaluative process includes an examination of purposes of the unit in terms of the goals of a democratic society and in terms of the methods used in arriving at these purposes. It is a process

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 49-66, *passim*.

This section should contain (1) books, (2) pamphlets, (3) periodicals, (4) films, (5) film strips, (6) slides, (7) pictures, (8) recordings, (9) maps, (10) charts, (11) models, and the like.

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 49-66, *passim*.

of determining how well and to what extent these purposes are being realized, and in this way it gives an opportunity for redirection or reformulation of the objectives continuously throughout the teaching process.

Purposes should be stated in operational terms, that is, in terms of student behaviors. In planning for the resource unit, methods and situations should be considered which will provide opportunities for helping students to develop these behaviors. In addition, methods and techniques for evaluating progress toward the attainment of these goals should be included. The process of evaluating is one in which both teacher and students are concerned, and it should help them to perceive more clearly their values, goals, and purposes.

We thus see that evaluation is thought of as a continuous process throughout the teaching-learning program and not just as a series of instruments or techniques to be used at the end of the learning unit. Values are shown in the way that life problems are met, and evaluation is a process of clarifying these values. The resource unit should offer suggestions to the teacher for helping the student to see what his values are and the consequences to which they lead in terms of democratic living.

It follows that the suggestions for evaluation in a resource unit are of necessity general rather than specific. Techniques adapted to the particular situation will suggest themselves to the teacher. Yet suggestions for the use of some of the following techniques might be helpful.

1. *Paper and pencil tests and instruments.* These would be used for the purpose of evaluating information, attitudes, skills, appreciations, beliefs, and ability to think critically. These include: essay, true-false, multiple choice, matching tests; application of principles, interpretation of data, and nature of proof tests; scales of belief, rating scales of various kinds, and instruments dealing with social acceptance.

2. *Anecdotal records of student behavior.* This technique is helpful in evaluating changes in student attitudes and appreciations. These may be gained through observations in and out of school and through conferences and conversations with students.

3. *Student records, diaries, and other records of self-appraisal.* These may be used in appraising attitudes, interests, abilities, appreciations, and values.

4. *An analysis of jobs and projects undertaken by students.* This involves a consideration of both the process and the product and exposes values, abilities, skills, standards, and methods of attack.



5. *School records.* Those kept by teachers, administrators, and health officials may give information as to the growth of the student in terms of the purposes of the school.

6. *An analysis of written and oral work.* This may be valuable not only in getting at information learned but in getting at values, attitudes, interests, and appreciations.

7. *Reports and observations by parents.* Growth of the individual as revealed in the out-of-school situation may be gained through reports from parents and through conversation with them.

Our unit on *Helping Teenagers Explore Values* provides many suggestions for evaluating changes in behavior resulting from the unit study.

#### A. *Evaluating Growth as the Study Progresses*

##### 1. *Initiating the Unit*

At the outset the class and the teacher will need to determine cooperatively the common goals toward which they wish to work. Within this broad framework, each student will determine his own goals in view of his needs and interests. This procedure provides a base for all later evaluations.

In determining the scope and sequence of the learning unit, students have an opportunity to evaluate their present level of knowledge about values and the influence of these beliefs on daily living. This kind of evaluation serves to organize past experiences and provide direction for future learning. At this point students might write about their present level of understanding to be compared with subsequent appraisals.

In planning the methods of working individually and in groups, each class member can evaluate his learning habits and thus, more effectively, set for himself a plan to improve his ability to use the following techniques of learning: research, cooperative group work, note taking, writing skills, oral reporting, etc.

##### 2. *Developing the Unit*

As students gather materials for bibliographies, displays, reports, etc., they can evaluate their ability to find information and organize it in a manner meaningful to themselves and others.

During this period the teacher has many opportunities to confer with students about their progress. This informal talking gives insight about the extent of learning both to the teacher and to the student. Evaluations of this kind function to direct future efforts and indicate any needed reformulation of purposes as the unit unfolds.

This is a good time for students to write about their progress and to share their findings and thoughts with others. This kind of evaluation may be informal or it may be a test; in either case it should represent a means of determining progress rather than the final mark.

It is suggested that a student committee be chosen to develop with

the teacher some appropriate evaluative devices to use at the conclusion of the unit. These might be themes, tests, perhaps a radio or assembly program, articles for the newspaper, or a bulletin board display. The important thing is that knowledge about the proposed methods of final evaluation be shared and accepted by the class.

During the work period, the teacher and students may discover, as they go about the business of finding information, the need for work on skills and time may be set aside for this purpose.

### *3. Culminating the Unit*

Summaries by groups and individuals show more effectively than tests the level of understanding that each person has achieved. As students seek to perfect their ideas and thinking for the purpose of sharing them with other groups, they can judge the extent to which they have advanced toward the original goals.

As committees report their findings, evaluation can be carried on informally in terms of understandings and relationships among ideas presented to the class. The questions asked a committee by the students most assuredly reflect their level of understanding as well as their background of knowledge.

Enthusiasm and evidences of changed behavior are manifested as individuals report their ideas to the class. Again evaluation is easy and informal.

Since most schools give marks, the culmination period offers the teacher a chance to confer with each student and to evaluate the activities he has pursued in the unit. Thus the grade can be cooperatively determined, and the student understands the meaning of the mark he has earned.

While informal evaluations need not obviate the giving of a final test, they tend to put such devices in their proportionate place relative to all else the student has accomplished. Thus a test is but one evidence of growth rather than the sole measure.

Oral evaluation of the unit in terms of what made it successful, areas of weakness, etc., set the stage for planning the next unit more effectively. Thus evaluation is a continuous process from the unit's inception to the point at which it merges into the next area of study.

### *B. Evaluating Growth Toward the Objectives of the Unit*

The objectives listed below are those which introduced the resource unit. They form the broad framework or criteria against which students are evaluated. Following each objective is a specific means for appraising pupil progress in that area. The evaluative material which has been suggested previously should also be used for securing evidence in the areas defined by the objectives.

*1. To help students identify and clarify values.*

At the beginning of the unit each student should list and briefly explain what seem to him to be the major values by which he lives. This list may be compared with one prepared at the conclusion of the unit. Comparison should indicate growth in breadth of values; ability to define and elaborate a value; ability to reflect upon meaning of a value in living, etc.

*2. To help students determine sources of values.*

The student might attempt to place the values he identifies as his into categories of derivation such as (1) home and family, (2) friends, (3) church, (4) government, (5) prejudices, mores, customs, etc. Repeating this allocation of value sources at the end of the unit indicates growth in recognizing sources of values.

*3. To help students understand the role of values in directing their lives.*

Have students keep a record of situations both in school and outside in which they are called upon to make a decision as to whether their action is right or wrong. Determine, in each instance, how the student's value system directed this action. Were his values static or dynamic? Did his values remain the same at the end of the unit?

*4. To help students determine the consequences of acting upon their values.*

Have students write an analysis of some subject of particular concern to them. This may be critically analyzed by the teacher to see what the student seems to approve or disapprove. From this might come some indication of whether or not the student needs to look at his values in terms of their consequences. For instance, a student might place high value on beautiful clothes. The student needs to examine what constitutes a well-dressed person and to understand that all members of the family should have a share in preparing the clothing budget. From this he might see the implications of his values.

*5. To help students develop an ability and desire to appraise their values.*

Students may be helped to clarify their values through role playing. He is asked to play the role of himself, a teacher, parent, brother, sister, or friend in certain situations. In order to see other sides of a problem, it is necessary to put himself in places of others. He will be able to appraise the values held by each of these persons and see how consistent they are with democratic values and those of his own.

*6. To help students examine critically their method of acquiring and changing values.*

At the beginning of the unit students may set up a series of beliefs, examine them critically, and determine their sources. For example, determine whether they are based on misconception, superstition, tradition, fact, or external authority. Students may indicate the beliefs they hold.

Near the end, have students examine same beliefs. Recheck and note any changes. Students may determine reasons for these changes.

*7. To help students become aware of the impact on their lives of the conflicting values in the American culture.*

Various points of conflicts in our society such as world government, freedom of speech, government and social welfare, control of industry, and racial equality may be described in paragraphs. Students are asked to pick out one or two of the best reasons they believe we have for delaying to do something about the specific problem. Also, they may be asked to select, out of the many reasons given, the one they consider the poorest. Something of the same type of judgment may be asked on what attitude the student has toward the problem; and what he considers to be the hope for solving the problem at the present time.

Provision may be made for an exchange of all ideas to see how other students feel about the problem. From examination of each other's views, the students will probably be helping each other to see what they believe, where they differ, and how they can work together to get some of the problems solved.

*8. To help students develop an open-minded attitude toward those who hold different values.*

Select a situation which involves differences among people because of their different backgrounds or ideas. Choose pupils who are fairly well informed on the issue and are more imaginative, articulate, and self-assured than the others. Give them two or three minutes to prepare a sociodrama. At the same time prepare the class for a serious observation of the drama. Follow up the drama with discussion and possibly a re-enactment of the drama. This may lead to a more tolerant attitude toward those whose values differ.

*9. To help students develop a workable and maturing philosophy of life.*

The teacher can describe certain situations and have the students write their reactions to the situation. This is a possibility for securing evidence concerning insight into factors which contribute to democratic living. The situation is described and then, following this description of the situation, questions are asked to get specific reactions from the students.

The situation: Marjorie's father is a doctor and she often goes with him on calls to the poorer homes. Marjorie's mother objects to her going with her father because Majorie always comes home wondering why the people must live in such poor homes; why the children haven't good, warm clothes; why they haven't enough money to buy the necessary medicines. Marjorie's father jokes and says, "Don't worry about such things, Marjorie. A pretty girl like you has no need to concern herself. The poor are always with us." Marjorie's mother says, "Why worry about them? They are happy as they are and would not have a nice home long

or good clothes, if they were given to them. They are just shiftless and no good."

The student is asked to write an analysis including answers to such questions as (1) What are some of the values held by some of the characters? (2) Are these values consistent with democratic values? (3) Illustrate and tell why you think they are not democratic.

### C. *Specific Evaluative Activities and Tools*

#### 1. *Sample Teacher-Made Tests*

This kind of device should be used before the unit is well along and shortly before it terminates. The changed opinions or statements expressed by students should indicate the measure of their growth. Perhaps the statements might be phrased to illustrate the objectives of the unit.

The following statements represent some of the kinds of beliefs the people in America find influencing their actions. Please indicate if this is a value you hold; one that seems to be very influential in your life. Make any kind of qualifying remarks you wish.

- a. It is sufficient to tolerate the other fellow's point of view at the level of words but not action.
- b. People responsible for new scientific discoveries are thereby responsible for the use other people make of them.
- c. All men are equal before the law but not in social situations.
- d. Modes of conduct approved by the community are better than those the individual could figure out for himself.

#### 2. *Formal Testing Devices*

- a. Social Problems Analysis—Bureau of Educational Research, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University.

Describes various social situations, mainly in the area of home and family living, in which conflicts often occur. Students select several reasons why we have been slow in solving the conflict, identify the poorest reason given; they also indicate what they believe to be the scope of the problem and the hope for solving it. By comparing student "answers" during a class discussion, understanding of conflicting points of view occurs. This kind of device can be used in a before and after situation in connection with class study of an actual conflict mentioned in the test.

- b. The Mooney Problems Check List—New York, The Psychological Corporation.

This instrument lists a large number of areas in which students generally have problems: health, finance, courtship, morals and religion, etc. Student answers to the questions under each large category can be used as a basis for analysis of the values involved. A repetition of the check list should indicate the importance of a clear understanding of the operation of values in conflict and problem situations.

- c. The Ohio Social Acceptance Scale—Bureau of Educational Research, Columbus, O., The Ohio State University.

Determines the extent to which a student is accepted or rejected by the group. Each person rates every other person in terms of:

- a. Very, very best friends
- b. Good friends
- c. Not friends, but O.K.
- d. Don't know them
- e. Other people in the room

Obviously the results of this kind of evaluation should be shared in a private interview between student and teacher. The test has relation to the study of values because a student should recognize the relationship between his values, his conduct, and what others think of him. It leads to self-analysis and points toward Objectives number 3 and 4. These tests should be used with the utmost caution. They should be administered upon the advice of a person trained in guidance and counseling.

- d. Interest-Values Inventory. For grades 9-16; \$9.35 per 100, 25¢ for specimen set; nontimed but takes about 30 minutes; J. B. Maller and Edward M. Glaser, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 2960 Broadway, New York 27, New York.
- e. Study of Values: A Scale for Measuring the Dominant Interests in Personality. College and adults; 1931; \$2.25 per 25; 15¢ per specimen set; nontimed; Gordon W. Allport and Philip E. Vernon, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, Massachusetts.
- f. Mental Health Analysis. For grades 4-8, 7-10, 9-16, adults; 1946; IBM; Form A; \$1.75 per 25; 35¢ per specimen set, on any level; 7¢ per copy, machine-scoring edition; 2¢ per answer sheet; nontimed; Louis P. Thorpe and Willis W. Clark; Ernest W. Tieg, consultant; California Test Bureau.
- g. A Tentative Check List for Determining Attitudes on 50 Social, Economic and Political Problems.  
Age 15 to adult; 1939; nontimed; Herbert Bruner, Arthur Linton, and Hugh Wood. New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University.

The materials of evaluation must be developed by the teacher and the students in light of the particular objectives they have set for themselves in the unit. The concept which has been presented points the way toward making democratic values and procedures a part of daily classroom living. The techniques and suggestions for evaluation which have been listed should serve as guides for the teacher in planning with his students.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 67-74.

carrying on group and individual learning experiences.

C. *Culminating Activities.* In order to strengthen the learning experiences, culminating or evaluating activities should be suggested. The type of culmination should depend upon the nature of the unit and the needs of the class. A successful culminating phase will give the students a sense of satisfaction and a feeling of control over the basic problems of the unit. It should provide further opportunities for the student to express himself through art, speech, dramatics, writing, and creative work of various kinds. Certain of the activities in that section of the resource unit could be suggested for this purpose.

Many of these general suggestions for the use of the unit are made explicit in the final section of the resource unit on values. They are as follows:

#### A. *Introduction*

This resource unit may be regarded as a reservoir from which the teacher working in cooperation with the students, may draw helpful suggestions for developing a unit of work in the classroom. It embraces a wide area, and teacher and students together should plan the particular aspect they wish to explore.

In planning for the unit, the teacher should read carefully the section on scope and utilize the professional bibliography for the purpose of gaining deeper insights into the possibilities of the unit.

The degree of maturity of the students will determine the activities to be undertaken and the extent to which various areas are to be explored.

In selecting learning experiences the teacher and students should examine carefully the suggested activities which relate to the theme of their learning unit.

For example, an eighth-grade class may choose to call a learning unit in the areas of values *Why I Believe As I Do*; a tenth-grade class may select *Conflicting World Ideologies*; and a twelfth-grade group may choose *A Philosophy of Life*.

Other learning units which might evolve from this resource unit are:

1. Understanding My Values
2. Religions of the World
3. My Values and Me
4. Values to Live By

5. Values of Democracy vs. Communism
6. Let's Look at Our Values
7. Why We Behave As We Do
8. Human Behavior and Values

#### *B. Teacher-Student Planning*

The teacher and students together in an initial planning session will establish the criteria for selecting the unit. The approach to the unit and the objectives will be determined by the needs of the students, problems they wish to solve, and the goals they set for themselves. As a guide for developing objectives, the teacher should consult those suggested at the beginning of this resource unit.

The concept of teacher-pupil planning does not imply that the students take over the classroom. This resource unit provides the teacher with background understanding which will enable him to help students identify and clarify their problems. In this sense the teacher is a partner with his students, but because of his maturity and experience, he has the responsibility for guiding the planning.

The students' problems provide the framework for what is to be studied. The resource material will help them find the answers to their problems. Thus, it is not direction by either the teacher or the students, but rather by cooperative planning. For example, a student may not plan to improve his grammar, but when he sees a need for this, and that it is desirable, he will make an effort to develop this skill.

#### *C. Subject-Matter Resources*

After the students and the teacher have developed the objectives for the unit, they will plan the various subject-matter resources from which they may procure information for solving the problems. For example, material from the social studies will be needed as they explore the values held by different cultures and countries. They will be developing skills in language arts as they pursue their writing and research activities. Literature is a rich source for determining values. Experiences of students will lead them into the field of science as they test, through the scientific method, the claims of advertisements and the bases of superstitions.

#### *D. Initiatory Activities*

The approach to a learning unit should be a period of class orientation in which a series of vital activities are carried on for a period of several days.

The following are alternative means by which the teacher may choose to identify the problem and get the unit underway:

1. During the planning session when questions and issues relative to the unit are being explored, some time may be allotted to defining terms such as: belief, culture, ethics, religion, faith, philosophy, morality, and ideals. This may lead to the establishment of goals and clarification of objectives.



2. Ask students to classify the values which they hold into such categories as: personal, social, economic, political, religious, and aesthetic. From this may come questions which they wish to have answered. Group discussion may then be centered around questions asked by individual members of the class.

3. See the film:

- a. You and Your Friends      Associated Films, Inc.  
7 min. sd                      New York, New York  
\$40—Rent \$3                      1946

Scenes from a teenage party contrast friendly cooperation with self-centered bad manners. Emphasizes the qualities people need if they wish to be, and to have friends—loyalty, dependability, courtesy.

Criticize and evaluate contrasting behavior as revealed through the film. What are the chief mistakes of the persons involved? What ideals would you recommend? Are there conflicts between beliefs? How may they be resolved?

- b. Boundary Lines              International Film Foundation  
10 min. sd.                      Inc., New York, New York  
Color—\$90                      1947

A plea to eliminate the arbitrary boundary lines which divide people from each other as individuals and as nations, invisible boundary lines of color, origin, wealth, and religion.

Examine the feelings you have toward peoples of other religions, social class, and race. Do you judge the person on his merits as an individual or his background? What is the most desirable practice?

4. Set up hypothetical problem situations that involve choice between alternative values and ask members of the class to react to them. The following is an example:

Your best friend has been nominated as president of a club. You know his opponent is far better qualified for the position and will do a better job. For whom would you vote?

5. Daily occurrences such as a news event

Congress has before it a bill which would reduce the tariff on textiles coming from Japan.

Discuss the values involved. What attitude would the general public assume? What about the special interest groups?

6. Personal Problems

a. Mary has been invited to a school party, but her parents have told her she must be home by ten o'clock. She believes this is too early. Suggest possible courses of action in solving this problem and reasons to support them.

b. Students may be asked to list the questions they wish to have answered. A committee of students may check the questions for duplication and the teacher then structures them into a workable out-

7. Collect pictures and clippings and file for reference.  
See activities 8, 28, 39, 55, 95, 97 and 121.
8. Write letters, reports, reviews, poems, diaries, tests, and quizzes.  
See activities 1, 2, 7, 15, 17, 41 and 124.
9. Produce murals and do individual work in paint, clay and other art media.  
See activities 8, 23.
10. Read stories, biographies, text books, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, plays, and poetry.  
See activities 10, 21, 22, 23, 52, 66, 71, 75, 80, 96 and 103.
11. Music
  - a. Learn folk songs of racial and religious groups.
  - b. Listen to recordings of great musicians of different races.
  - c. Learn hymns and anthems of various religions.  
See activities 110, 113 and 115.

#### *F. Culminating Activities*

1. Keep anecdotal records of students' behavior and note any changes which have occurred in their attitudes toward superstitions, hostilities, conflict, prejudices, anxieties, and ideals.
2. Utilize informal and formal tests.
3. Write up experiences and reactions for school newspaper or local paper.
4. Prepare tape recordings of findings and conclusions.
5. Exhibit models, posters, charts, murals, and illustrations.
6. Prepare and present a dramatic production in which the various findings and conclusions are portrayed.
7. Present an assembly program or radio program.
8. Plan and carry out action on problems in the school such as a code of conduct for students, student government, and community projects.
9. Since all culminating activities are in a sense an evaluation the teacher will find many helpful suggestions in the section on evaluating the outcomes of the unit.  
See activities 7, 44, 53, 58, 63, 110, 113, 115 and 122.<sup>22</sup>

#### **SUMMARY**

The construction of resource units is a valuable procedure in curriculum reorganization. It provides a means of introducing flexibility into teaching procedures and promotes interaction among staff members representing different interests. This cooperative relationship among staff members serves to enrich learning activities in the classroom.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 76-80.

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 76-80.

Certain overarching generalizations concerning the development of resource units may be stated. Among them are:

1. Resource units are best developed by a group of teachers rather than by one teacher.

2. Resource units are likely to be most effective when they are prepared by the group that expects to use them.

3. The resource unit should be organized and indexed for effective use and published in a form that facilitates frequent and easy revision.

4. A program of resource-unit development requires that ample provision be made for physical facilities, released time for participants, secretarial and consultant service, and the like.

The following are fairly common elements in the organization of resource units:

1. The general philosophy and purposes of the school in which the resource unit is to be used should be well understood by those who prepare the unit and in most cases should be stated in the unit.

2. The objectives of the unit or its possible contributions to the general purposes of the school should serve as a guide to the development of the unit, and therefore should be explicitly set forth.

3. The resource unit should contain a statement of scope, i.e., the limits of the areas included; the major problems, issues or hypotheses; definitions of terms used; the grade levels for which the unit is designed; and helpful references to orient the teacher to the problem area.

4. A wealth of carefully selected group and individual learning activities, organized for effective use, is an indispensable part of a resource unit.

5. Every resource unit should include a wide variety of reference materials and other teaching aids with annotations, organized for effective use.

6. Evaluation procedures and instruments, selected in terms of the stated objectives, should be included as an integral part of the resource unit.

7. The possibilities of extending the type of experiences of the unit to other units or areas is sometimes helpful to the teacher in further planning with his class, and therefore should be included.

8. A discussion of the various ways the different sections of the unit might be used by a teacher in the cooperative planning of a learning unit is an important part of every good resource unit.

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## *A Program for Improving the Curriculum: principles, procedures, and activities*



IN PREVIOUS CHAPTERS various facets of curriculum development have been explored. An attempt has been made to establish workable principles dealing with purposes, learning, adolescent development, curriculum design, classroom practices, and preplanning for learning. But knowledge *about* curriculum making is of little value unless it is put into actual use in the teaching situation. Many of the suggestions for improving the curriculum which have been made could be utilized by the individual teacher, even though no general program of curriculum reorganization is carried out by the school in which he teaches. He may improve and refine his philosophy. He may study his students in order to determine their needs. He may introduce new materials, such as supplementary reading and audio-visual aids. He may improve his discussion techniques. As a matter of fact, the teacher's growth is largely dependent upon the intelligence which he brings to bear in improving his own teaching situation. There are, however, limits beyond which he cannot go without the cooperation of his colleagues on the staff and the administrators of the school. If he changes his program too radically, he is bound to run head-on into conflicts.

A school which operates upon the basis of individual freedom for the teacher, with little or no concerted planning and action, loses its finest opportunity to live democratically and to refine its program through the pooling of the intelligence of all members of the staff. This final chapter is devoted to suggestions as to how the teaching staff may work co-operatively on the improvement of the program.

## **CURRICULUM IMPROVEMENT: A CONTINUOUS PROCESS**

The school which is alert to its responsibility for meeting the needs of youth is engaged continuously in the process of curriculum reorganization. Every time a teacher utilizes new materials, plans with students for new types of learning activities, or finds new resources for making learning more effective, he is engaging in curriculum reorganization. And when *all* teachers are so engaged in terms of a common philosophy, common purposes, and a curriculum design cooperatively determined, curriculum improvement becomes a continuous process. Unfortunately, such optimal conditions do not exist in many schools. Teachers have not been led to operate in terms of a reasonably common philosophy. The design of the curriculum has been handed down by those in authority. The teacher fits into the groove provided for him without asking embarrassing questions. He is "given" his curriculum in the form of a textbook. Obviously, when such a situation exists, there is need for a concerted period of study and planning leading to relatively drastic changes.

When a school makes a concerted effort to examine all aspects of its program, involving all personnel in the task, with a view to bringing about comprehensive changes in outlook, design, and program, it is operating on what is known as a "*uniform front*" approach. Unfortunately in many such programs the assumption was made that once the "new" curriculum had been launched, everyone could heave a sigh of relief and get down to the business of teaching with or without much reference to the new program. This, of course, violates the principle that curriculum development is a never ending process if it is to keep pace with a dynamic, rapidly changing society.

Because of the failure of many comprehensive programs of curriculum development, it has been proposed that curriculum development proceed on a "*broken front*." Hollis Caswell, who perhaps did more than any other American educator to further the "*uniform front*" approach, stated in 1950:

In the beginning of the curriculum movement it was assumed that changes from an old to a new curriculum could be achieved at a given time throughout a school system. It was customary to speak of two stages in a curriculum program—production, which referred to preparation of new courses of study, and installation, which referred to putting them into use.

. . . It was expected that all teachers would initiate the new curriculum at the same time. . . .

As experience in curriculum programs increased, the concept of change on a "uniform front" was one of the points at which radical modification occurred. . . . Thus there developed the conception of change on a "broken front." This recognized that modifications in practice have small beginnings, with a few teachers taking the lead in the difficult process of testing new ideas. As new practices are demonstrated to be feasible, more teachers take over their use. . . . Curriculum improvement is fostered by encouraging and aiding teachers to develop innovating practices and then by facilitating the spread of those found feasible.<sup>1</sup>

While the advantages of small-scale curriculum-development programs, perhaps in a single area, are real, it must be pointed out that there is danger that such programs may be carried out without reference to an over-all design, and eventually lead to a disorganized program. *Total* program development is still a crying need in most school systems.

Regardless of which theory of curriculum development is adopted, the principle of continuous study, examination, and evaluation of present practices still is a sound one. Probably a sharp line cannot and should not be drawn between the "uniform" and "broken front" conceptions. The size of the unit, the leadership, the readiness for change, and the procedures by which change is brought about may be more important than the nature of the front. Then, too, a program may start as a broken front and become a uniform one in a short time—again depending upon conditions.

One way of determining whether a "uniform" or "broken front" approach should be made would be for the school faculty under the direction of the principal, or someone designated by him, to spend a number of faculty meetings in discussing such criteria as the following.

*A. Does the curriculum make adequate provisions for all youth regardless of intelligence level, interests, race, creed, or socioeconomic background?*

What is our drop-out rate? What type of student drops out? What are we

<sup>1</sup> Hollis L. Caswell, and Associates, *Curriculum Improvement in Public-School Systems*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1950, pp. 51-52, *passim*. Most of the programs described in this book are of the "broken-front" type. This position is reaffirmed in the 1960 "sequel" to the Caswell volume: See Harold J. McNally, A. Harry Passow, and Associates, *Improving the Quality of Public School Programs*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1960. Many of the reporting schools reflect the "broken front" approach.



doing to increase the holding power? What percentage of our students go to college? Do they succeed. What are we doing for the non-college-bound student? Do we section on the basis of ability? Any other basis? Does such sectioning, if any, reflect the class structure of society? Does our student "fee system" work a hardship on students from low-income groups? Can all youth profit substantially from our program? How effective is our guidance program?

*B. Has our school developed and implemented a basic philosophy of education that rests squarely upon democratic values?*

Was the development of our philosophy a cooperative enterprise? Is our faculty in substantial agreement on the meaning of democracy? Have the major values of democracy been broken down into operational categories? Have we worked out the implications of democracy for each area of the curriculum? For administration? For guidance? For classroom methodology? For public relations? For learning? Does our philosophy tend to indoctrinate? Does our staff periodically examine and revise the philosophy?

*C. Is the curriculum based upon a dynamic conception of the learner and the learning process?*

Do staff members support the organismic conception of learning? What place is given to individual and group reflecting thinking? How is transfer of training facilitated? How does the curriculum provide for the development of attitudes? Are skills developed in relation to other learning products? How is intrinsic motivation provided for? What place is given to the student's goals? Are learning processes evaluated in terms of democratic outcomes?

*D. Is the curriculum based upon the immediate and predicated needs, problems, and interests of the learner?*

Have we used problems checklists as one means of discovering needs, problems, and interests? Interviews? Case studies? Did our faculty make a thorough survey of the literature of adolescent development as one aspect of improving the curriculum? How is the so-called conflict between immediate needs and societal demands reconciled? Were needs, problems and interests of the students actually used in determining the scope and sequence of the curriculum?

*E. Does the curriculum provide effectively for learning through direct first-hand experience in the school and the wider community?*

Is direct first-hand experience an integral part of the curriculum, or merely "tacked on"? How much emphasis is placed upon "covering ground" in the textbook? Does our school encourage trips, excursions, etc., into the immediate and wider community? How effectively does our school utilize the resources of the community in providing effective learning experiences?

Are students helped to develop systems of ideas as a result of their direct first-hand experiences? Do teachers object when students are "taken out" of their classes to go on trips? Is the public sold on trips and excursions, or does it regard such activities as "sight-seeing and play-acting?" Is direct first-hand experience considered by our faculty to be as educative as studying from books?

*F. Does the curriculum provide an effective program of general education, designed to develop the ideals, attitudes, understandings, and skills needed by all citizens in our democracy?*

What concept of general education is held by our teaching staff? Does the staff recognize the significance of general education for promoting democracy? Does our school still retain the separate subject organization of general education? Is there general agreement that categories of curriculum organization directly related to the needs of youth would be more effective than subjects? Are the personal-social needs of youth given prominent consideration in the program of general education? What concept of the core is represented by our present program of general education? What concept should we try to introduce into our program? What are the blocks to moving from where we are to where we want to go?

*G. Does our school make effective provision for all of the non-vocational and vocational special interests of the students?*

Does our curriculum provide a good balance of activities between the non-vocational and the vocational areas? Do the college-bound students have a richer program than the non-college students? Is our "student activity" program an integral part of the curriculum? Is our guidance program effective in helping students to discover the appropriate special-interest areas? Do college preparatory subjects tend to crowd out the arts, music, and the so-called practical subjects? Does our school still follow the traditional Carnegie unit in setting up courses? Is the introduction of new courses determined by the faculty or the administration? What part do pressure groups play in the introduction of new courses and in the retention of outmoded courses?

*H. Does our school utilize a modern plan of unit teaching and learning?*

How much of the instruction in our school is based upon the daily-ground-to-be-covered assignment-recitation procedure? How do teachers in our school provide for individual differences *within* the class? Are the units experienced-centered, or just blocks of organized subject matter? Are the units based upon a sound conception of the learning process? Are units set up in advance, or decided upon cooperatively? Are daily assignments made within the units?

*I. Does our school provide effectively for democratic student participation in the classroom?*

Are the basic principles of democratic group process understood by our teaching staff? By the administration? By the students? Do teachers generally create an atmosphere of permissiveness in the classroom? Do the teachers make general use of role-playing, sociodrama, and psychodrama. Do students help to evaluate their learning as the unit progresses? Do the teachers make effective use of committees for investigating problems? Are such committees democratically organized? Do students actually enjoy helping to plan? Are they gradually assuming more responsibility?

- J. *Do classroom teachers carry on effective programs of group and individual guidance through the day-to-day learning activities of the classroom?*

Does the curriculum actually help students to solve their problems and meet their needs, or must these things be cared for outside of the regular curriculum? Does the special guidance counselor (if any) work mainly through the teachers or apart from them? Does the guidance counselor appreciate the possibilities of guidance through the curriculum? Is he a leader in curriculum development? Are adequate records available to the classroom teachers for giving individual guidance?

- K. *Does our school have a definite, well-understood policy toward including controversial issues in the curriculum, and are such issues consistently taught?*

Do we as teachers regard the teaching of controversial issues an indispensable aspect of the school program? Are there shunned or neglected issues that teachers are afraid to deal with? Have definite techniques for dealing with controversial issues been worked out? Does the community accept the school's obligation to deal with all controversial issues that are within the maturity level of the students? Has a cooperatively developed policy for dealing with controversial issues been worked out and approved by the board of education?

- L. *Has our school developed and made available adequate resource units, files, or guides to aid teachers in the cooperative planning of learning activities?*

Are resource units in the major fields of the curriculum—particularly in general education available to teachers? Has there been wide participation of teachers in different areas in the development of resource units?

Do these resource units serve as guides rather than as mandates? Do these resource units include a wealth of suggested activities and teaching-learning aids? Are these units organized for effective use? Does the form facilitate easy revision?

- M. *Does our school provide adequately for audio-visual materials as a regular part of classroom instruction?*

Do we have an adequate library of films, film strips, and recordings? Is it accessible to the teachers? Do we have adequate projection equipment? Are we equipped to receive television programs?

N. *Is the curriculum of our school evaluated in terms of the values of democratic living and the goals expressed in the statement of philosophy?*

Does our school make use of the newer type of evaluation instruments designed to test intangible values? Is a program of standardized tests in the so-called fundamentals imposed by the administration? Does the testing program of our school promote, or interfere with curriculum development? Does our testing program imposed by an external agency such as a state department of education, or a board of regents, interfere with curriculum development? Do college-entrance examinations stereotype our program?

O. *Does our school engage in a systematic, continuous, and democratically organized program of curriculum improvement?*

Does the administrative and supervisory staff of our school provide democratic leadership in a program of curriculum development? Do the teachers in our school regard curriculum development as a primary and legitimate function? Are laymen involved in the process of curriculum development? Does our administrative staff provide facilities, such as space, stenographic service, and released time for teachers, in order to carry on the curriculum-development program?<sup>2</sup>

If the school does not adequately meet a considerable number of these criteria, then perhaps a "uniform front" approach is indicated. On the other hand, if only here and there are weaknesses indicated, the school might well deal specifically with those areas—always, of course, in light of the total program.

## **SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS**

In this section a number of important problems relating to curriculum development in schools or school systems are taken up. This is done through the statement and development of principles which, in the judgment of the authors, are important.

1. *The individual school is the most satisfactory unit for curriculum development.* The literature of curriculum development discloses wide

<sup>2</sup> See also: *How Good Are Your Schools?*, Washington, D. C., National Education Association, 1950, McNally, Passow, and Associates, *op. cit.*, Chapter XII, "Criteria for Evaluating the Curriculum Improvement Program."

differences of opinion as to what is the most satisfactory unit for determining curriculum policy and program. There does, however, seem to be general agreement that the Federal government even under a program of Federal grants should not be permitted to determine policy or program except to insure that the grants be utilized in such a way as to safeguard the principle of equality of opportunity. Experience in curriculum development over a large area, such as a state, has not been very promising. Virginia is a typical example of a state in which a very elaborate and intelligently conceived program was developed in the early Thirties. Few traces of this program remain. The reason is probably that the unit was too large to involve a high percentage of those who were expected to put the program into effect. This does not mean that the state has no responsibility for curriculum making. It can help individual schools through bulletins, resource materials, and consultant service, setting up experimental programs and engaging in cooperative enterprises looking toward school improvement.<sup>3</sup>

County and city units are sometimes satisfactory as bases for curriculum development if they have a tradition of working together, if individual variation within the system is encouraged, and if local school leadership is democratic and dynamic and is able to secure widespread participation.<sup>4</sup>

Ideally, an individual school, by which is meant a group of students and teachers working with a principal, usually in one building, is the most satisfactory unit for curriculum development. A number of such schools may, of course, be coordinated by means of a central planning committee, but decisions on curriculum problems should be in the hands of the local unit. Democratic group processes are most effective in such a unit because there are likely to be more shared concerns, and participants are

<sup>3</sup> See *Ibid.*, pp. 113-140. This is a report of the Illinois Curriculum Program, prepared by Fred Barnes. It is an excellent example of what a state department of education can do to facilitate curriculum development.

<sup>4</sup> For a good example of county-wide curriculum development, see: *Ibid.*, pp. 141-165. This is an account of curriculum improvement in Dade County, Florida, reported by Jeff West. The basic point of view is summarized thus: "The Dade County System operates on the fundamental principle that the individual school is the basic unit of instructional improvement. Genuine curriculum development can come about only as it is cooperatively planned in schools and in classrooms. The systemwide framework for the improvement of instruction provides for over-all coordination and is designed to provide individual schools with wide latitude of choice in their curriculum improvement activities." (p. 164)



*Courtesy, The Ohio State University School Photo by O.S.U. Department of Photography*

Ideally, an individual school by which is meant a group of students and teachers working with a principal—usually in one building, is the most satisfactory unit for curriculum development.

The seventh and eighth-grade staffs of The Ohio State University School, Columbus, Ohio, are reviewing and evaluating the year's experimental program and planning for next year.

sufficiently well acquainted to facilitate the widest possible communication. The resulting curriculum is thus more likely to reflect the needs of the community. Local school units must, of course, work within the framework of the rules and regulations set forth for larger units of which they are a part, e.g., city, county, or state.

2. *Curriculum development is primarily the responsibility of classroom teachers.* Many years ago, Briggs came forth with a pronouncement that teachers generally were incapable of making the curriculum and furthermore had no desire to do so. He proposed that a curriculum

commission made up of the best minds should assemble in Washington for this purpose.<sup>5</sup> In a somewhat less drastic proposal he advocates the following:

What is needed and what I have long been convinced is inevitable is a permanent National curriculum research laboratory as well staffed as the research laboratories of industry, which spends on them annually more than half as much as all public education costs. . . . Only by research based upon an interpretation of what the public wishes its community to be can the necessary raw materials of the curriculum be prepared. Such raw materials professional teachers can adapt to local conditions.<sup>6</sup>

Briggs apparently has little faith in curriculum-development programs carried on by classroom teachers under local leadership. He points out:

But the insufferable obstacle to changing the curriculum so that the functions [of the junior high school] can be realized is the lack of time, of materials, and of ingenuity to develop obviously needed teaching units. The Consumer Education Study spent nearly a half million dollars and several years of time to enable its staff to produce a dozen teaching learning units. Such costs in money and time are more than any school or school system can afford. When improved units are locally produced, they seldom are widely known or are used elsewhere.<sup>7</sup>

Briggs is not alone in favoring national action in curriculum development. In January of 1959 a conference<sup>8</sup> was called to consider, among other things, "How can the public-school curriculum represent the na-

<sup>5</sup> Thomas H. Briggs, "A Proposal for a Curriculum Commission," *Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals*, XXIX, 79-90 (May, 1945).

<sup>6</sup> Thomas H. Briggs, "The Conant Report on the Junior High School" *Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals*, XLIV, 13-20 (November, 1960).

<sup>7</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>8</sup> *Conference on Policies and Strategy for Strengthening the Curriculum of the American Public School*, Stanford, California, January 24-27, 1959. (Mimeographed) Summary of the report prepared by Ralph Tyler. The conference was a follow-up of an article by Paul Hanna in the *Nation's Schools*, September, 1958, entitled: "Design for a National Curriculum." The Conference was called by Paul R. Hanna and Ralph W. Tyler. Its personnel, in addition to Hanna and Tyler, consisted of the five "outstanding" laymen, five "well-known" scientists and scholars, and five persons "more directly concerned with the guidance and direction of public education" For an elaboration and clarification of Hanna's position, see: Paul R. Hanna, "Proposed—A National Commission for Curriculum Research and Development," *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLII, 331-338 (May, 1961).

tional interest in the objectives, the content and the character of education and at the same time reflect the special needs and interests of the state and of the local community? Can a proper division of activities, of responsibility, and authority be outlined to serve as a basis for efforts at improvement?"<sup>9</sup>

The group agreed (not unanimously) on the establishment of an Advisory Committee whose function would be to study the history and present status of the curriculum and to publish its conclusions "as to the curriculum, priorities, and means most effective to implement such curriculum and priorities in the public schools."<sup>10</sup>

It should be noted that the National Commission or committees proposed by Briggs and the Conference are entirely outside of government and could not possibly have anything more than an advisory status. Their studies, reports, and recommendations would be made available to local units as valuable resources in curriculum development. In the judgment of the authors this is as it should be. Classroom teachers under local leadership, marshaling all the resources of the community, would and should have the major responsibility for curriculum improvement. If teachers are not competent to perform this function, it might well be argued that they are also incompetent to teach. Actually, unless they assign daily lessons from textbooks and merely listen to the students as they "re-cite" what is "cited" in the book, they are *making* the curriculum every day. If we do not believe that teachers are competent to develop the curriculum, we might as well stop urging teacher-student planning, classroom guidance, and cooperative development of purposes, for these things are the essence of curriculum development.

3. *A sound supervisory program is directed toward helping teachers to become more competent in curriculum development.* In some cities the term supervisor has been dropped in favor of "consultant" or "co-ordinator" in order to help destroy the traditional connotation of supervision as an instrument of visitation and conference for the purpose of ferreting out weaknesses and then applying timeworn remedies which were regarded as the exclusive possessions of supervisors.

Many writers in the field of supervision analyze types of supervisors on the basis of conflicting conceptions of their roles. One of these

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> See Chapter V for national studies now under way, some of which may eventually in a "national curriculum," considering that term in its broadest sense.



analyses<sup>11</sup> divides supervisors into four classes: (1) the autocrat, (2) the diplomatic manipulator, (3) the laissez-faire supervisor, and (4) the democratic supervisor.<sup>12</sup> Needless to point out, Wiles advocates democratic supervision. He declares emphatically, "The principal problem for supervisors is to discover ways of working *within* staffs."<sup>13</sup> Actually the supervisor should be regarded as a resource person whose main job is to help teachers improve the teaching-learning situation through coordinating the activities of all by finding ways of working together on the solution of common problems.<sup>14</sup> Because he is freed from the classroom, he has the responsibility of helping to find resources and to give direction to the on-going process of curriculum development. The supervisory staff cannot and should not, even if it were competent to do so, develop the curriculum.

4. *The high-school principal assumes the basic leadership role in curriculum development.* In far too many schools the principal devotes most of his time to the routine of school management. He keeps the machine running smoothly, giving much attention to absence and tardiness, buying and checking supplies, and arranging for athletic contests. These are all very necessary activities, but they are marginal and affect learning only somewhat indirectly. Many of these activities could be delegated to clerks. Usually the principal is paid a very much higher salary than the classroom teachers. The best way to earn that salary is for him to assume the role of leadership of the teaching staff in solving problems that directly affect learning in the classroom. In other words he becomes the leader in curriculum development.<sup>15</sup> In many instances high-level administrative policies prevent him from assuming this leader-

<sup>11</sup> Kimball Wiles, *Supervision for Better Schools*. New York, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, Chapter I. Compare with the much older formulation in Harold Albery and Vivian T. Thayer, *Supervision in the Secondary School*, Boston, D. C. Heath and Co., 1931. These authors include the "scientific" supervisor who goes from room to room administering tests, rating the teachers by means of checklists, and "objectively" measuring every aspect of the teaching-learning situation.

<sup>13</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>14</sup> See *Leadership for Improving Instruction*, 1960 Yearbook, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D. C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA, 1960 for interesting illustrations of effective leadership.

<sup>15</sup> See Paul M. Mitchum, *The High School Principal and Staff Plan for Program Improvement*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958.

ship role. The "central office" assumes the responsibility for him. The supervisors "check-in" at the school to inform him of their presence and then proceed to usurp his principal function. The easiest thing for him to do is to revert to the routine of "counting and dispensing thumb-tacks." In other words, a weak principal is made increasingly weaker by misguided administrative policy, just as the weak teacher is made weaker by having a ready-made curriculum, prepared in the superintendent's office or by a National Commission, handed to him.

5. *Laymen and students have important roles in curriculum development.* There is general recognition of this principle in theory—but far less in practice. The role of students in participating actively in all phases of classroom activities has been discussed fully in Chapters X and XI. The classroom seems to be the logical level upon which they may function—and of course, this does not mean that the teacher abdicates his responsibility.

The function of laymen is not as well understood as is that of students. In Chapter X of this volume instances in lay participation have been discussed. Many activities in curriculum development listed in the next section of this chapter call for assistance from laymen. An important consideration in lay participation is the definition of the level upon which laymen participate. Curriculum development is a technical job requiring special professional competence. It is extremely important that *the respective roles of teachers and laymen be made clear in the early stages of curriculum-development projects.* Campbell and Ramseyer,<sup>16</sup> under the interesting caption, "Confusion about Who Does What," attempt to define the areas of decision between the laymen and the professional educator. They hold, with considerable logic, that "since the schools belong to the people, it seems obvious that society should determine the function or purpose of the school." The difficulty, as these writers point out, is the determination of what group or groups of laymen can and should speak for society in a given situation. Nevertheless the principle is clearly stated in the following quotation:

We grant the desirability of learning the suggestions of local (school) people on what the school ought to teach, but we are of the opinion that the final determination of *what* the school is to do is a lay decision. After

<sup>16</sup> Roald F. Campbell and John A. Ramseyer, *The Dynamics of School Community Relationships*, New York, Allyn & Bacon, Inc., 1955.

considering all the facts the public, largely the local public, has the right to say whether or not it wants kindergartens, whether or not it wants more vocational education, whether or not it wants more stress on skills, whether or not it would like more moral and ethical education.<sup>17</sup>

The area of professional decision, these writers contend, is in determining the "how" of education—in determining the "operational procedures" of the school. They argue their point in this manner:

It is in these operational procedures that school people are most nearly professional, and in many cases are fully professional. In the teaching of arithmetic, for instance, no fewer than 133 studies are referred to in the *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*. Nine of these have been devoted to the single problem of method in subtraction. Laymen should recognize that they are hardly in a position to discuss the equal-addition method in subtraction unless they have made as much study of the problem as have teachers. . . . The same might be said with respect to whether or not the phonetic method be used in reading, the grade level at which spelling is to be introduced, and the place of the field trips in teaching about the local water system.<sup>18</sup>

The above authors do not make a sharp distinction between the "what" and the "how," and they would readily admit that the examples cited are extreme ones. Surely the citizens will determine in the long run what kind of a school they will have. This they will do through legislative enactment, by election of board members who are pledged to do their bidding, and through pressures operating through these channels, but the fact remains that the "what" and the "how" are so closely related that a definite policy cannot be laid down that will determine in all cases the role of laymen in curriculum development. Ideally they would participate with teachers on the level of their particular competence, and final decisions would be made by the group, subject, of course, to final ratification by the board of education. In most cases, if the local professional leadership works democratically with all community groups that have a stake in the public schools (and what groups do not?), the question of final authority will never arise.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>19</sup> For many illustrations of effective participation by laymen, see Helen Storen, *Laymen Help Plan the Curriculum*, Washington, D. C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1946; *Building Public Confidence in the Schools*,

thing worthy of respect. To fail to accept it as the "best answer" as of that particular date, is a violation of the process by which it was created.<sup>21</sup>

### THE CURRICULUM-IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM— SOME STEPS AND ACTIVITIES

This section is designed to provide concrete suggestions for the kinds of activities in which curriculum-improvement groups might engage. They are part of a curriculum-resource guide, originally prepared by a seminar group of graduate students.<sup>22</sup> In addition to the list of activities, the resource guide contains a brief introduction to each category of activities and an extensive bibliography. The activities are classified under the following headings:

1. Creating a Feeling of Need for Improving the Curriculum.
2. Determining a Comprehensive Organizational Structure for Curriculum Improvement.
3. Formulating or Re-examining the Basic Philosophy and Goals of the School.
4. Developing Working Principles for Dealing with Adolescent Development and Learning.
5. Determining the General Design of the Curriculum.
6. Determining the Scope and Sequence of the Curriculum.
7. Developing Principles and Procedures for Planning and Guiding Learning.
8. Discovering and Organizing Resource Materials for Instruction.
9. Setting Up a Comprehensive Evaluation Program.

In a general way, the above categories represent sequential steps in the curriculum-development process. However, it is unlikely that any group would use the precise order in which the activities are grouped. Perhaps the categories should be regarded only as one way of classifying a wide variety of activities in which curriculum-improvement groups might engage. The list is intended to provide such groups with a large

<sup>21</sup> Harold Benjamin, ed. *Democracy in the Administration of Higher Education*. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1950, Chapter V, p. 68.

<sup>22</sup> For the complete report, see Harold Alberty and Associates. *How to Improve the High School Curriculum*. Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University, 1959. (Mimeographed) The following graduate students participated in preparation of the monograph. Leonard Brubaker, Akilu Habte, Oliver Lumpkin, Dale Knapp and Teruo Ihara.

number of possible activities from which they may choose those that are appropriate to their particular situation. For each activity, suggestions are made as to the individuals or groups that might initiate and carry it out.

*1. Creating a Feeling of Need for Improving the Curriculum.*

1. Make a study to determine the extent and cause of dropping out of school before graduation. Study the results to determine the extent to which the curriculum was responsible for the situation. Report findings to the faculty and the Parent-Teacher Association.

This activity might be initiated by the principal at the request of a small group of parents whose children have not continued in school until graduation. It could be carried on by the administrative staff or by a committee of teachers. It would, of course, involve many parents through interviews, questionnaires, and the like.

2. Make a follow-up study of graduates to secure information on such questions as: How do our graduates fare in colleges? What do our graduates think of their high school? What kinds of experience do our graduates feel were lacking in their programs? Make the results available for faculty and community discussion.

This activity might be initiated and carried out by the guidance personnel of the school. Frequent progress reports should be made to the faculty.

3. Make a survey of the attitudes of employers toward the effectiveness of the training afforded the students they employ. What are the lacks? the strong points? How well does the curriculum meet the needs which are revealed? Call a faculty meeting to discuss the findings. Invite several prominent employers to attend.

This activity might be carried out by a lay group or committee. One of the service clubs might take the initiative. The group should work in close co-operation with the school. If the school has a program of vocational education, personnel in the area might carry out this activity or participate actively in it.

4. Make a survey of the attitudes of parents toward the school curriculum. Find out how parents feel about the school's success in developing ideals and values as well as in teaching the fundamentals. Discuss the findings in faculty and P.T.A. meetings.

This could best be done by teacher teams, perhaps with the help of public-spirited laymen. Interviews rather than questionnaires would probably be preferable.

5. Make a questionnaire or interview study of the attitudes of students toward their school to find out what they like and dislike

about it. Report the findings to the faculty and the student body.

This activity could best be carried out by home-room teachers or guidance counselors.

6. Set up standards for evaluating a high-school curriculum, using the literature of the field. Apply these standards to the school curriculum. List deficiencies and indicate possible directions of improvement.

The faculty and administration could best undertake this activity, but it might involve appropriate representatives of lay organizations.

7. Ask an accrediting association to evaluate the high school, making use of the *Evaluative Criteria*, 1960 edition. Make the results the subject of careful faculty study.

This activity ought to be carried out by the administration and a committee of teachers—after discussion and agreement by the faculty and the board of education.

8. Conduct a problem census in the curriculum area of the school, making use of informal discussion groups, interviews, and the like. Have the results pooled and reported to the faculty as a whole, with a view to developing an in-service education program.

This might be a faculty activity over an extended period of time. Late in the project, students and laymen might be brought in to study the list and possibly add to it.

9. Ask supervisors to report to the faculty the results of a series of classroom observations directed toward ascertaining: the apparent interest of students, the use of direct experience, the role of the textbook, and the extent of teacher-student planning.

Such a program should be presented to and discussed by the faculty and the superintendent or principal. The faculty might set up a checklist to report findings.

10. Set up a faculty lounge equipped with comfortable, attractive furniture and provided with an up-to-date professional library. Encourage teachers and interested laymen to aid in equipping this lounge and in making use of it.

The administrators or a committee of teachers, or both, in cooperation with the board of education might initiate this activity. *Public-spirited laymen should be invited to participate.*

11. Set up a curriculum laboratory. Have a committee follow the reviews of curriculum materials in the leading journals and order copies of all promising materials. Circulate a bulletin calling these materials to the attention of teachers.

This activity could best be carried out by teachers representing the various curriculum areas. It should call for some re-

news concerning the school: special problems faced, needs to be met, and the like.

The journalism teacher might take responsibility for getting this project under way. The superintendent of schools might make the initial contacts with editors and publishers.

19. Organize discussion groups among laymen to identify critical problems involving the curriculum. The results might be assembled and given publicity through public meetings or the press.

This might be done under the leadership of the P.T.A. Teachers might well join these groups in order to supply needed information concerning the school program.

20. Organize a citizens' advisory committee to meet regularly with selected school personnel to discuss needed improvements in the program, particularly in the curriculum field.

Initiative might be taken by the superintendent of schools, the board of education, or a citizens' group such as the Kiwanis or Rotary clubs. Care should be taken to see that the group is representative and that the purposes are well understood.

21. On the basis of the various studies that have been carried out, list the strengths and weaknesses of the present curriculum.

Perhaps a committee of representative teachers could best carry out this activity.

## II. *Determining a Comprehensive Organizational Structure for Curriculum Improvement*

1. Study reports of curriculum-improvement programs from school districts of comparable size to determine the organizational structure which they employed. Make charts of the different plans for use in a faculty meeting.

This activity might be initiated by the superintendent or a curriculum co-ordinator or supervisor; it might be performed by a committee of volunteer workers.

2. Set up a list of criteria for evaluating organizational structures. Take into account the philosophy and purposes of the school, effective use of democratic group processes, recognition of unique abilities of professional and lay personnel, and the like. Examine proposals for organizational structures in light of the established criteria.

The superintendent, supervisor, or co-ordinator might call a faculty meeting at which the initial discussion could take place. A committee might be selected or interested persons might volunteer to undertake this activity.

3. As part of the school public-relations program, organize parent-teacher groups to study organizational structures of curriculum

improvement with special emphasis on the parents' role in the undertaking.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum coordinator, school principal, or the curriculum steering committee.

4. Make a list, possibly in sequential form, of the tasks that need to be done in organizing curriculum-improvement programs.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the superintendent, the school principal, or the curriculum steering committee.

5. Make a study of operational procedures such as released time, clerical help, physical arrangements, and finances.

This activity might be initiated by the superintendent, school principal, the curriculum co-ordinator, or the curriculum steering committee.

### III. *Formulating or Re-Examining the Basic Philosophy and Goals of the School*

1. Develop criteria for evaluating the philosophy and goals of secondary education. Apply these criteria to available statements of philosophy, including your school's present philosophy and the contemplated revision of it. If the philosophy is new, apply the criteria to the finished product.

This project might be undertaken by a representative group of teachers and lay persons who can later report and discuss their findings with the entire faculty and selected lay groups.

2. Hold a faculty meeting to discuss the problem of indoctrination in relation to the task of formulating the philosophy of the school. Someone might report on the philosophy of reconstructionism as advocated by Theodore Brameld and others.

This discussion might be led by volunteer members of the faculty and administration who would also be responsible for gathering and distributing pertinent information on the topic.

3. Prepare a checklist of values, principles, or beliefs concerning the role of the secondary school in society. Ask teachers to indicate their convictions regarding the items on the list. Use the results as a basis for determining agreements and for reconciling differences.

This activity might be undertaken by a faculty committee using selected publications of the Educational Policies Commission. They could be assisted in this task by representatives of student organizations and special services.

4. Interview leaders in the community to determine their attitudes and beliefs concerning the role of the secondary school in the immediate and wider community. Before the P.T.A. hold a



forum or panel discussion on the values or objectives which the school ought to foster.

This might be undertaken by the teaching staff with some assistance from student and parent groups.

5. Secure a statement from each staff member concerning his personal philosophy of education. Compare all statements for similarities and inconsistencies to arrive at the highest level of agreement.

This might be initiated by some member or members of the administrative staff who could distribute a form to all members of the faculty. A composite could then be made with the assistance of a small group of faculty members and secretarial help.

6. Secure a statement of purposes and objectives representing the beliefs of the people in each curriculum area in the school. The various statements could then be analyzed for common elements in an effort to arrive at a general agreement on the school-wide statement of philosophy and objectives.

This activity might be initiated by the school administration, a supervisor, or a committee of classroom teachers.

7. Make a study of the major philosophies of education by examining the literature and sharing information in faculty discussion groups.

This activity might be undertaken by the entire faculty who would first select the most appropriate texts on the subject and later divide reporting responsibilities among themselves. A short written statement of each philosophy could be distributed as a guide to intelligent discussion.

8. Make a statement of values and behaviors that the secondary school should develop and perpetuate. Use this statement in evaluating selected major activities of the school such as grading and promotion, discipline, and teaching methods.

This activity might be undertaken concurrently with activity No. 3. Presumably it would be the responsibility of the entire faculty working in small groups.

9. Seek the highest level of faculty agreement on the solution of major issues in secondary education.

The administration could distribute to each faculty member a list of major issues. This could serve as a prelude to further study and discussion before workable levels of agreement are reached.

10. Administer a problems checklist to the student body. This could be followed by a questionnaire completed by faculty members to determine if such problems should be considered in the school

area, a committee of parents and teachers, or the administrator.

17. From the school or local library or through the library loan services of a college or university in your state, secure a list of books dealing with the philosophy and goals of education. Distribute the list to interested faculty members, students, and lay persons. Either buy or borrow the books selected and use these to activate study groups.

This activity might be initiated by the school or public librarian at the suggestion of the administrator or a teacher, by a volunteer faculty committee, or by a committee of parents.

18. Submit a tentative statement of the goals of the school for examination and approval by the faculty, students, and appropriate lay groups.

This activity might be initiated by members of the school staff. It could include discussion of purposes with the student body, P.T.A., service clubs, and the professional staff. It might also be helpful to seek the co-operation of the local press.

#### IV. *Developing Working Principles Dealing with Adolescent Development and Learning*

1. Make a study of the principles involved in learning, growth, and development as one of the bases for organizing the curriculum improvement program.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the department head, the principal, the teachers, or some combination of these groups.

2. Organize committees to investigate the literature on adolescent development and learning with a view to building background information and developing resource files of experimental studies and other research materials in the area.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum steering committee, a parent-teacher group, the administration, or a committee of teachers.

3. Make case studies of youngsters with learning problems for use in initiating faculty discussions on how to provide for individual differences.

This activity might be initiated by the school psychologist, the guidance counselor, the classroom teacher, the curriculum co-ordinator, or administrators.

4. Organize study groups to discuss and determine the problems common to adolescents. Develop the implications of the findings of the study for curriculum improvement.

This activity might be initiated by the school psychologist, the

guidance counselor, the chairman of the education committee of the Parent-Teacher Association, teachers, or administrators.

5. Make a survey of student interests as a means of arriving at generalizations relating to adolescent development. Make comparisons with studies such as those by Gesell, Jersild, and others.

This activity might be initiated by the school psychologist, guidance counselor, the curriculum co-ordinator, or the teachers through the curriculum steering committee.

6. Make arrangements to utilize "adolescent development and learning" as a central theme for meetings of teachers' organizations.

This activity might be initiated by individual teachers, by representatives to the assembly of the local teachers' association, or by the chairman of the program committee of the local teachers' association.

7. Organize a panel composed of teachers, parents, administrators, and consultants to discuss the problem of adolescent development and learning.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the curriculum steering committee, or the Parent-Teacher Association.

8. Through a problem census, determine what teachers consider to be their main problems in the area of adolescent development and learning. The problem list might represent the summation of suggestions from faculties, principals, professional associations, and the curriculum steering committee.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum steering committee, the curriculum co-ordinator, the guidance counselor or the principal.

#### *V. Determining the General Design of the Curriculum*

1. Make a study of the design of your present curriculum in light of your philosophy and objectives and the principles of adolescent development and learning which you have adopted. This study might be divided into two parts—general education and specialized education. Suggest needed changes.

This activity might be undertaken by the teaching staff. The general-education phase might be studied by the staff as a whole or by a representative group, while the special-interest phase might be studied by staff members in the various areas of specialization. The results of the studies should be pooled.

2. Make a study of the advantages and disadvantages of various types of organizations for general education. Include separate subjects, correlated or fused subjects, and the problems or needs

organization which cuts across subject lines. Report findings at a series of faculty meetings.

This might be an all-school activity involving the entire teaching and administrative staff and possibly members of community groups.

3. Secure from the state department of education a list of schools, similar to yours in size and type of community served, that have recently engaged in curricular-improvement programs. Through correspondence or visitation determine what type of curriculum structure they have found to be best suited to their needs. Use this information in determining the design of your curriculum.

Schools might be visited by a committee representing the board of education, the administration, and the teaching staff. If the information is to be secured by correspondence, probably the principal could best initiate the study.

4. Compare the curriculum designs suggested by the Committee of Ten (1893) with the proposals made by the Committee on Reorganization of Secondary Education (1917) to determine the suitability of either of these proposals for improving the structure of your curriculum.

This activity should be carried out by a committee of the teaching staff aided by interested, capable parents.

5. Make an analysis of curriculum designs of the schools in the Eight-Year Study as reported in *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story* to determine which, if any, have significant implications for your situation.

This activity can best be carried out by a committee of the teaching staff.

6. Study the proposals for curriculum design made by the Educational Policies Commission as reported in *Education for All American Youth: A Further Look* to get suggestions for improving your own structure.

This activity should be carried out by a committee of the teaching staff.

7. Ask a curriculum specialist from a nearby teachers college to meet with the staff to discuss and appraise current trends in curriculum designs. Following the presentation, set up a round-table discussion by a representative group of teachers dealing with the applicability to your situation of the ideas presented.

In this activity the principal or superintendent might take the initiative after clearing the financial arrangements with the board of education.

8. Examine the records of your school since its beginning to determine changes in curriculum designs that have been made. Make an effort to discover the cause and effect of these changes.

The administrative staff might assume responsibility for this activity.

9. Examine some of the leading books on the high-school curriculum to determine the extent to which authorities agree upon the most desirable design. Account, if you can, for any sharp disagreements discovered. Make the findings of this study available to those involved in the curriculum-improvement program.

A committee of the teaching staff might initiate this activity. The task of reporting on the various books might be assigned to members of the committee.

10. Construct and display a large chart showing three or four possible designs of the curriculum. Illustrative subjects, activities, problem areas, and the like may be "roughed in" to show how each design would be implemented.

This might be done by the art area of the school using data supplied by a committee of the teaching staff.

11. Construct and display a large chart showing the design selected for the school. Use sufficient illustrative materials to assist in planning for the implementation of the design.

This might be done by the art area of the school with data supplied by a committee of the teaching staff.

#### VI. *Determining the Scope and Sequence of the Curriculum*

1. Draw up a list of criteria for judging the scope or content of the curriculum. Such criteria should be in keeping with the accepted psychological principles of learning and the philosophy and goals of the school.

This activity might be initiated by a representative group of teachers, administrators, and parents. It would entail a study of the pertinent literature and possibly the services of a curriculum consultant.

2. Draw up a list of criteria for judging the sequence of learning experiences in the school curriculum. It is important here to utilize knowledge of adolescent growth and development and the psychological principles of learning.

This activity would involve the co-operation of the entire faculty and administration.

3. Make a study of the major proposals for determining the scope and sequence of the curriculum.

Such a study might be undertaken by faculty committees with assistance from the school administrators or by a combination of lay persons and teachers. It might involve co-operation of the librarian in securing appropriate literature and research findings.

4. Make a study of a selected number of schools that are using different plans for determining scope and sequence.

Such a study might be conducted under the leadership of the school administration and would involve participation by teachers. It would probably entail the use of correspondence, personal observations, and interviews. Such a list of schools might be secured from the state department of education.

5. Make a study of the major problems and ideas relating to scope and sequence encountered by schools participating in the Eight-Year Study. Volume II, *Exploring the Curriculum*, and Volume V, *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story*, should be especially appropriate.

This activity might be undertaken by a committee of teachers who could later report their findings to the entire faculty.

6. Make a study of the operational implications of each plan of scope and sequence. This may take the form of answering such questions as the following: What does this plan involve in terms of (1) securing resource materials, (2) revising the class schedule, (3) the responsibilities of individual staff members, (4) the outcomes we should work for, and (6) methods of evaluation?

This plan might best be initiated by a number of faculty committees. Perhaps each committee could work on a different plan of scope and sequence. Frequent opportunities for the sharing and pooling of information should be provided.

7. Make a list of the common needs, problems, and interests of students at different levels of maturation.

This activity might be carried forward with the assistance of guidance personnel, administrators, faculty members, and students. A faculty may want to make its own questionnaire or use some commercially designed instrument such as the SRA Youth Inventory or the Mooney Problems Checklist. Compare results with the lists of adolescent needs developed by national committees.

8. Make a study of the special interests of the student body to determine curriculum offerings desired by the greatest number of students.

This activity might be initiated by guidance personnel with assistance from student representatives, by a committee of homeroom teachers, by administrators and faculty, or by some combination of these groups. This study could be implemented through the use of questionnaires, individual interviews, and cumulative records.

9. Make a study of special competencies and interests of the staff to determine the specialized-education areas that can be offered.

This activity might be undertaken by the administrators and would involve a study of each teacher's credentials and individual interviews with each staff member.

cation and principles of adolescent development and learning to which the teaching staff subscribes.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum council and carried out by a small committee representing the different curriculum areas.

3. Survey the literature dealing with the unit plan of teaching. This should include the history and evaluation of the unit idea, its advantages and disadvantages, and present trends. If some of the teachers are using this plan, ask them to submit written accounts of successful units they have carried out. Report on the feasibility of unit teaching for the school as a whole or for different curriculum areas.

This might be initiated by the curriculum council and carried out by a representative committee of the teaching staff.

4. Make a survey of the extent to which first-hand experience is used in your school. Formulate some guiding principles for using it in improving instruction and indicate how such principles might be carried out in practice. This study might culminate in a mimeographed or printed handbook to be used by the teaching staff.

This might be initiated by the curriculum council and carried out by a committee of teachers and laymen.

5. Make a study of the provisions which the school makes for individual differences in rates of learning, capacities, and talents. Explore the literature to determine the most promising practices and the principles and assumptions underlying these practices. In light of the findings, make recommendations for improving the present program.

This should be a long-range study, undertaken by a committee of administrators, teachers, and laymen, in co-operation with the entire teaching staff.

6. Set up a long-range experiment in identifying special talent and providing for its development. Call in specialists in this field to help formulate the design of such an experiment and the means of testing its effectiveness.

This might be initiated by the administration, approved by the board of education, and carried out by the curriculum coordinator in co-operation with a field representative of a college or university.

7. Invite a guidance expert to address the teaching staff on the role of the teacher in guidance and counseling and on the role of guidance in the school curriculum. As a result of such a meeting, a short-term workshop might be set up to study the implications

for improving the quality of learning activities and for helping students with their problems.

This activity might be initiated by the guidance area or by a curriculum co-ordinator or supervisor. It should involve the entire faculty and perhaps some laymen.

8. Examine the present policy (if any) and practices regarding the teaching of controversial issues. Inquire into the viewpoints of students, parents, and board members and elicit their proposals for the establishment or improvement of policy. As a result of this inquiry, propose a statement of policy for discussion in faculty meetings, the student council, and by community groups. After necessary refinements have been made by groups concerned, have the policy adopted by the board of education and distributed to school and community groups and to the local newspapers.

This activity might be initiated by the administration and carried out by a representative group made up of administrators, teachers, students, and representatives of community organizations.

9. Survey the teaching staff to discover the concepts and beliefs held regarding student participation in planning, organizing, carrying out, and evaluating learning experiences. Compare these stated beliefs with current practice in the school. Draw up a set of principles dealing with pupil participation that are consistent with the philosophy and purposes of the school and the nature of the learner and the learning process.

This is a long-range activity which might be initiated by the administration, a curriculum-planning group, or a supervisor. At various stages it should involve the entire faculty. Possibly a small committee of the teaching staff should co-ordinate the project.

10. Make visitations to neighboring schools for the purposes of observing pupil participation in planning, organizing, carrying out, and evaluating learning activities. Make a report of these observations to the faculty. Follow up with round-table discussion by selected faculty members.

This activity should be initiated by the administration and carried out by interested teachers.

11. From the various activities performed, formulate a statement of the principles and procedures for planning and organizing learning activities which seem most consistent with the philosophy and objectives selected earlier, with the curriculum design adopted, and with the concepts held of the nature and characteristics of the learner and the learning process. These should be incorporated into an attractive booklet, giving credit to the vari-



ous staff and community members who made significant contributions, and, after adoption by the faculty, distributed widely throughout school and community. Provisions should be made for a periodic re-examination and, when necessary, revision of this publication.

This culminating activity might be initiated by the planning group provided for in the organization for curriculum improvement and carried out by a committee made up of key teachers who have participated in related activities.

#### VIII. *Discovering and Organizing Resource Materials for Instruction*

1. Make a survey of the instructional resources available in the school, such as equipment, supplies, classrooms, and special-purpose rooms.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the curriculum steering committee, or the principal.

2. Prepare a comprehensive file of the personnel resources available on the school staff and in the community that might be used to facilitate instruction. This file should be located in the school office or some other convenient center.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the curriculum steering committee, teachers, or the principal.

3. Prepare a handbook on the instructional resource materials available in the school, such as resource units and files, mailing lists of the superintendent of documents, audio-visual and other catalogues, and sources for materials available through the state department.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the curriculum steering committee, teachers, or the principal.

4. Make a study to determine the extent to which the audio-visual materials are being used. Use the results of this study to plan a more effective audio-visual program.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the curriculum steering committee, teachers, or the principal.

5. Explore the question of whether the available resources should be centralized or decentralized. Propose and implement a plan in terms of the decision reached.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the curriculum steering committee, or the principal.

6. Formulate a program of utilizing lay groups such as the P.T.A., service clubs, and social agencies for assisting in securing and assembling instructional materials.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the parent-teacher group, the curriculum steering committee, or the principal.

7. Have the staff members submit a list of instructional materials which they consider necessary for an effective educational program. Prepare a budget on the basis of the list and present it to the school board.

This activity might be undertaken by the school principal or the superintendent.

8. Prepare evaluation guides to determine the extent and effectiveness of instructional resources used in the classroom.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the curriculum steering committee, the teachers, or the principal.

9. Prepare a file or catalogue giving information on factories, government agencies, museums, and the like, which may be utilized for field trips. The information should include such items as whom to contact, visitation hours, charges if any, and principal value of trip.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the curriculum steering committee, the guidance counselor, or the school principal.

10. Prepare a schedule of forthcoming community events and activities of significant educational value such as concerts, lectures, panel discussions, industrial exhibits, and exhibits at conventions. Make this information available to the staff.

This activity might be undertaken by the curriculum co-ordinator, the curriculum steering committee, standing committee of teachers, the school principal, or the superintendent.

11. Prepare an annotated list of materials available in the school for general distribution to teachers and principals.

This activity might be initiated by the curriculum co-ordinator, the curriculum steering committee, teachers, or the librarian.

#### *IX. Setting Up a Comprehensive Evaluation Program*

1. If the philosophy and goals of the school have not been formulated in workable detail, set up a committee to define, formulate, and classify the goals in detail and in terms of adolescent behaviors.

This activity may very well be carried on by a committee of teachers. The help of appropriate members of the administration or a consultant if the former is not available may prove useful.

2. Review and critically analyze available instruments to appraise such fundamental skills as reading, writing, computation, factual knowledge, and the like.

This activity may be undertaken by a team of teachers and administrators. The guidance specialist, if available, may prove to be very helpful.

3. Review and critically analyze the instruments available to appraise such attitudes and abilities as co-operativeness, social sensitivity, reflective thinking, creativeness, and so forth.

This activity, like the preceding one, may be undertaken by a committee of teachers, administrators, and guidance personnel. Information found in Volume III of the *Eight Year Study*—Smith and Tyler's *Appraising and Recording Student Progress*—should prove helpful.

4. Investigate and discuss the major purposes of evaluation in your school's program. Compare your school's position with statements made by authorities in the field.

Such an activity may be initiated by the administration and undertaken by a committee of teachers. The inclusion of lay persons is recommended.

5. Investigate, discuss, and outline the general procedure to be followed in developing the evaluation program. Compare yours with that of other school systems in the vicinity. Also compare your school's program with its statement of purposes and objectives.

The administration and representative teachers might undertake this task. Discussion of the results with a consultant might lead to further refinement.

6. Make a careful study of the possibility of using the *Evaluative Criteria* of the Cooperative Study of Secondary School Evaluation (1960 edition) in your school. Decide whether or not it may be of help in your school situation and exactly where the staff might utilize it in its evaluation program.

This activity should be undertaken by a cross-sectional committee of teachers and administrators and some representative lay persons.

7. Develop criteria for use in evaluation, marking, and reporting practices in your school. Compare your results with what authorities in the field say and with your statement of purposes and objectives.

This activity may be undertaken by a committee of teachers, parents, and administrators. The involvement of students should help secure more realistic outcomes.

8. Make a study of reporting forms and practices in your school and in other selected schools. Make a recommendation of forms for the use of teachers and for reports to parents.

This activity, like No. 7, might be carried on co-operatively with teachers, parents, and administrators.

9. Formulate principles of evaluation and determine the extent to

which these principles will be utilized in setting up the comprehensive evaluation program.

This activity might be initiated by a committee of key teachers and the curriculum co-ordinator or the principal. Care should be taken to secure participation of the entire staff and parents.

10. *Critically analyze a sample of formal and informal tests that teachers in your school use for different subjects. In the light of your findings and further investigation of the literature, develop and formulate a guide for teachers in planning, preparing, and interpreting formal and informal tests in your school system.*

This activity might be initiated by the principal, the guidance worker, or a committee of teachers.

11. *Prepare a checklist or questionnaire to secure information on what parents and others in the community actually value in the school program. This may be supplemented later by a selected number of interviews.*

This activity might be initiated by the administrator or a small group of teachers. The assistance of guidance personnel in drawing up the questionnaire and recommending appropriate interview procedures should prove helpful.

12. *Prepare a checklist or questionnaire dealing with desired behaviors or traits to send to college professors and employers who have been in close contact with graduates of your school. Secure their reactions on the extent to which the graduates of your school manifest the behaviors designated. These behaviors should be among the more significant that learning experiences in your school are intended to develop.*

This activity may be undertaken by a committee of teachers, an administrator, or a combination of the two.

13. *Make a study of the value and techniques of observation for evaluating behavior.*

This activity might be initiated by the guidance director, the school psychologist if one is available, or a committee of teachers.

14. *Make a study of the strengths and weaknesses of standardized tests as instruments of evaluation.*

This activity might be initiated by the guidance staff, but it should involve participation by teachers and the administration.

15. *Make a study of the type of information that is now being placed on school records for the purpose of evaluation. Compare with your school's statement of purposes and objectives for consistency.*

This activity might be initiated by members of the administration, guidance personnel, a committee of teachers, or some combination of these groups.

## SUMMARY

In this chapter the authors have attempted to present what they consider to be basic principles of curriculum improvement. The position is taken that curriculum development is primarily the job of the professional staff of a particular school or district, drawing on all available resources. This view runs counter to a certain prevailing trend—namely the development of curricula in the various fields of knowledge by national groups, often supported by grants from the federal government and the large foundations. In order to facilitate the process of curriculum development by local groups, an extensive list of activities has been presented in the hope that it will be useful in helping groups to see the possibilities for concrete study and action. These activities are organized in terms of steps in the curriculum-development process.

1. Creating a Feeling of Need for Improving the Curriculum.
2. Determining a Comprehensive Organizational Structure for Curriculum Improvement.
3. Formulating or Re-examining the Basic Philosophy and Goals of the School.
4. Developing Working Principles for Dealing with Adolescent Development and Learning.
5. Determining the General Design of the Curriculum.
6. Determining the Scope and Sequence of the Curriculum.
7. Developing Principles and Procedures for Planning and Guiding Learning.
8. Discovering and Organizing Resource Materials for Instruction.
9. Setting up a Comprehensive Evaluation Program.

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## A FINAL WORD

In this volume, the authors have presented tentative proposals by means of which a school may reconstruct its basic purposes and its curriculum. The proposals break sharply with traditional practices in the high school which tend to ignore the problem of unity of purpose and to assume that the teacher's principal job is to impart knowledge and develop the skills which are determined largely by the adopted textbook. Should

schools undertake the difficult task of changing traditional practices and transforming themselves into laboratories for the study of the problems which beset youth in our confused society and for designing an educational program which adequately meets their needs? This volume is a plea that this should be done. If the high school is to become one of the dynamic agencies by means of which our democratic society reconstructs itself, it *must* be done. That it can be done is evidenced by the growing number of schools that have been successful in working democratically on the problem.

Such living and working together under the guidance of a democratic philosophy of education should have a threefold effect. *First*, it should be the means of making the school an integral part of the life of the community instead of an institution apart from the vital currents of living. *Second*, it should transform the school into a place where students come to get help in the solving of their problems instead of a place where "lessons" are learned. *Third*, it should raise teaching to the level of a profession with unlimited possibilities for personal growth instead of a more or less temporary job to be carried out with little or no personal initiative or imagination.

The high school has a distinctive role to play in the perpetuation and refinement of our democratic way of life. It has an excellent chance of success if it dedicates itself to this high purpose and proceeds intelligently and courageously to the task of reorganizing itself to meet the challenge of the times.

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